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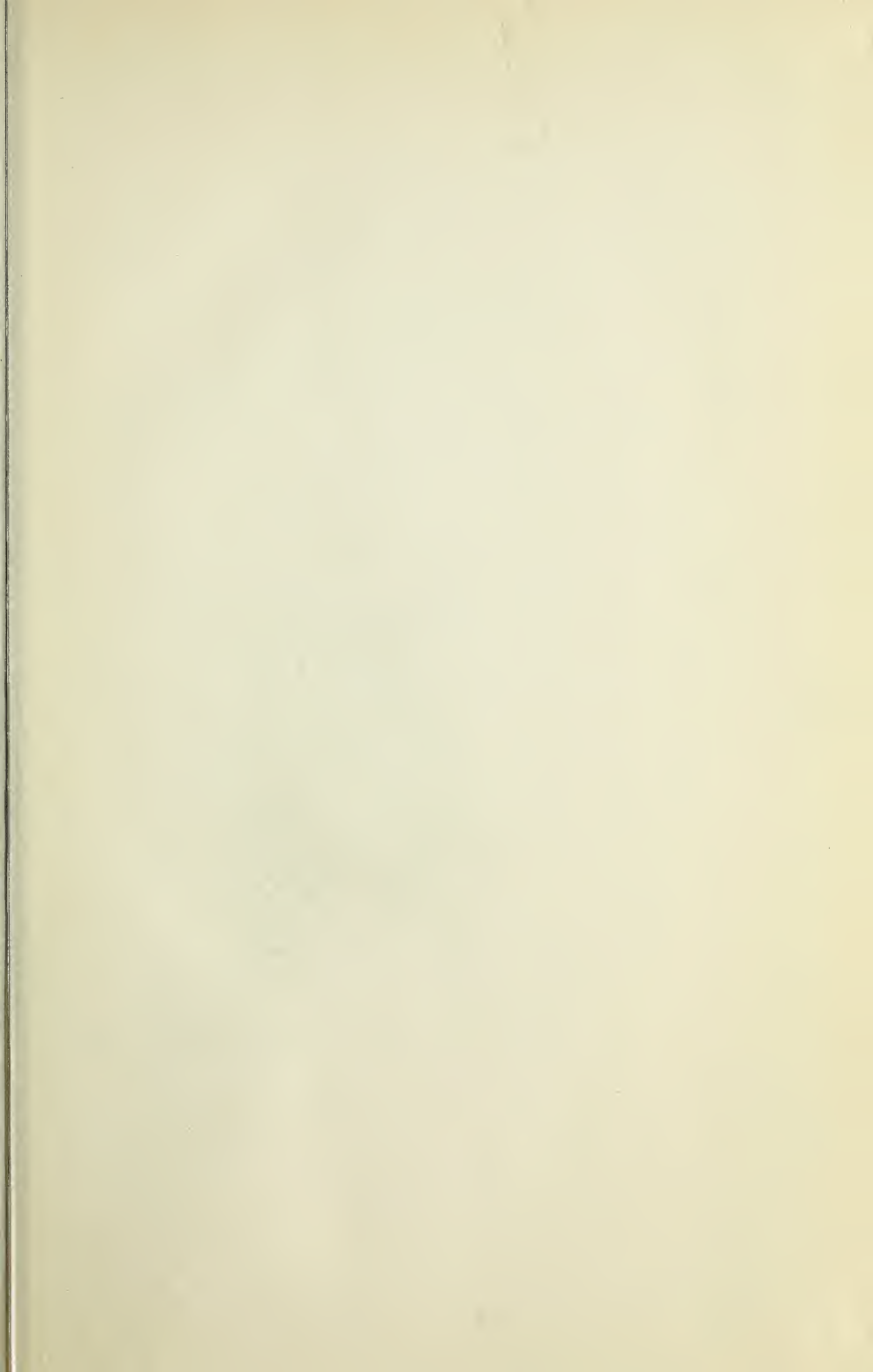
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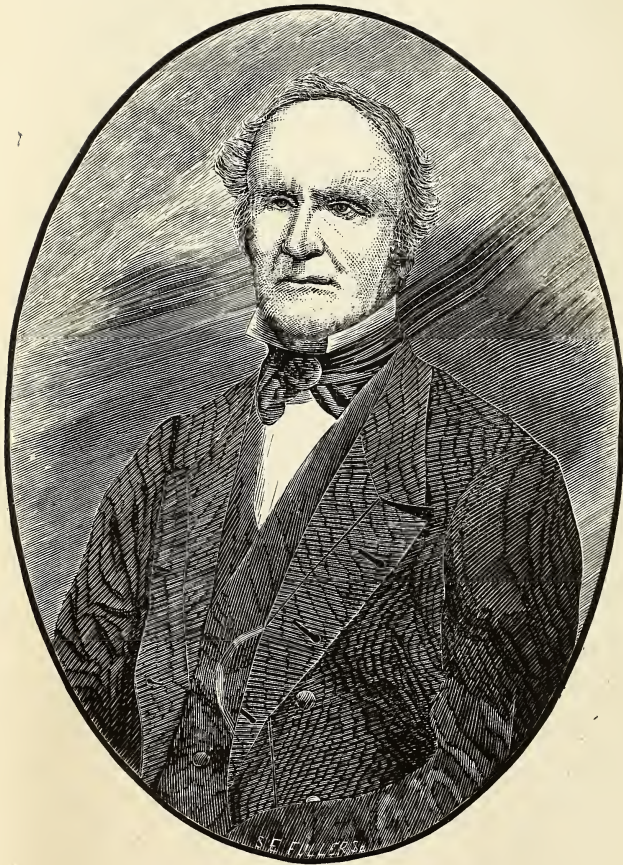








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FESTAL GATHERING

— OF THE —

EARLY SETTLERS!

— AND —

PRESENT INHABITANTS

OF THE TOWN OF VIRGIL, CORTLAND  
COUNTY, N. Y.,

HELD AT VIRGIL VILLAGE, ON THURSDAY, THE 25<sup>TH</sup>  
OF AUGUST, 1853,

*Embracing a Historic Sketch of the Town, Supplemented  
with a brief Historical Account of Events from  
that time to 1878,*

BY NATHAN BOUTON.

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DRYDEN, NEW YORK:  
A. M. FORD, FINE BOOK AND JOB PRINTER.  
1878.

THE [illegible]

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POST OFFICE AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE  
OF  
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## COMMITTEES.

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*Committee of Arrangements :*

NATHAN BOUTON, JOHN W. MORSE,  
RUFUS EDWARDS, JOEL HANCOCK,  
MARTIN LUCE, THOMAS MOTT,  
ALONZO SNIDER, EDWIN P. SLAFTER,  
HORACE BRONSON.

*Committee of Invitation :*

FREDERICK HYDE, R. O. REYNOLDS,  
NATHAN BOUTON.

*Committee on Music :*

E. P. SLAFTER, HARVEY M. SHEERAR.

*Committee on Dinner :*

HORACE BRONSON, S. M. ROE, ALONZO SNIDER.

*Officers of the Festival.*

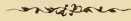
*President :*

SYLVESTER M. ROE.

*Vice-Presidents :*

RUFUS EDWARDS, JOEL HANCOCK,  
HORACE BRONSON, JOHN W. MORSE.

## Festal Gathering.



AT the suggestion of some of the former inhabitants of the Town of Virgil, who had simultaneously proposed visiting the place of their nativity, it was deemed appropriate to extend a general invitation to such as had formerly been residents of the Town, to unite with the present inhabitants, in such exercises as would be suitable to the occasion promising so much of interest and gratification. The invitations thus extended were responded to cordially, and at the time designated, a large number of people came together, including representatives from many of the oldest and most respected families of the Town, whose course in life has led them to remote parts of our land.

In accordance with the arrangements of the Committee, when the guests had arrived on the morning of the 25th of August, they were escorted to the Presbyterian Church, where they were respectively introduced to the people, by the President, Dea. S. M. Roe. R. O. Reynolds, Esq., in behalf of the people of the Town, then arose and welcomed the guests as follows:\*

FRIENDS AND GUESTS:—We are assembled here, after a separation of some years, to renew acquaintance, to brighten the golden chain of friendship, by genial interchange of hearts, of giving and receiving mutual pleasure. Many of you have been absent from us long and weary years. Some of you, ere you left us, had left the valley of youth and had begun the rough and rugged road that winds up the hill of active life. Then how much did the future seem to promise. Alas how little has been accomplished! The experiences of

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\*It has been thought that, inasmuch as the scene cannot be reproduced, and that a book of moderate dimensions would be more likely to be read than a large one, it would be best to abridge some of the addresses contained in the previous publication and merely present some of the outlines.

life are that disappointment is the common lot of all men. With this view of the case how soothing the thought that we may return to the scenes of childhood and mingle our sympathies with former friends of like experience. Of friendships broken, of faith betrayed, of wrong inflicted and hearts crushed in the miserable conflict for the honors and distinctions of this life, and even for avaracious, miserly gain, we never heard or deemed them but as a horrid and distorted romance of fiends instead of men.

He continued in this strain, expressing the utmost cordiality and courtesy, for nearly a half hour to the great satisfaction of those addressed, who were welcomed in the most hearty manner to the festivities of the day.

Dr. F. Hyde responded in a few remarks, and introduced to the audience M. Frank, Esq., who said:

He did not come expecting to make an address and was not prepared to do so. He had written to an individual in the county, when apprised of this meeting, that no public address must be expected from him. He would, however, make a few remarks. When he came in sight of the place, the scenes of his early years came up before him, and he felt himself young again. But when he came and looked upon the people assembled, he was reminded of his mortality—time had made its impress upon many a once familiar countenance. He recognized a portion of the assemblage, but they were mostly of a new generation, who had risen up to take the place of their fathers. He had been absent from the county many years; had resided in the west fourteen years. He said he had become westernized; he was, in fact, a western man—his feelings, sympathies and interests were identified with the west. The west was, however, not that far off country it once was; the facilities of travel and communication had brought it to the very doors of the east. Manners, habits and tastes which once characterized the west from the east, now scarcely had any distinguished traits, but were fast assimilating to one great uniformity. But power was tending westward—soon the destinies of the nation would be controlled by the population west of the Alleghany mountains. All good men in the west felt that the future welfare of the republic depended not upon political platforms, or the measures of political men. The moral and intellectual elevation of the people, especially of the rising generation,

was regarded as the only safe and sure guarantee to the perpetuation of our free institutions.

This meeting, he said, would be cherished in memory, as one of the most important events of his life. The recollections of the past and the scenes of the present awaken sensations and inspire emotions that can never be effaced from the mind. The past and the present, they pass in review before us, with a strange and yet indescribable interest. Voices once familiar here are now hushed in that mysterious silence to which all the living haste; friends we once loved to greet have passed from our sight forever. Those who seemingly but yesterday were young, appear to have been strangely hurried along the pathway of age. The responsibilities of manhood and active life, have, in part, passed to another generation. The destiny of the future of this Town is committed to the men now here upon the stage of action—that future will be elevated and glorious, in proportion as the moral and educational interests of the people are cared and provided for.

In behalf of the visitors from abroad, Mr. F. said he could not command language adequate to express a sense of obligation for the generous welcome and hospitality which had been extended. The expressions of kindness and friendship were overpowering, and he dare not trust himself with what the impulse of feeling might lead him to say. He concluded by thanking the assembly for its indulgence for the manifestations of kind regard.

At the conclusion of Mr. Frank's remarks the choir sang the following ode:

### HOME AGAIN.

WORDS BY MARSHALL S. PIKE.

Home again--home again—  
 From a foreign shore,  
 And, oh, it fills my soul with joy,  
 To meet my friends once more.  
 Here I dropped the parting tear,  
 To cross the ocean's foam,  
 But now I'm once again with those  
 Who kindly greet me home;  
     Home again—home again—  
 From a foreign shore,  
 And, oh, it fills my soul with joy,  
 To meet my friends once more.

Happy hearts—happy hearts,  
 With mine have laughed in glee;  
 But, oh! the friends I loved in youth,  
 Seem happier to me;  
 And if my guide should be the fate,  
 Which bids me longer roam,  
 But death alone can break the tie  
 That binds my heart to home.  
 Home again, &c.

Music sweet—music soft—  
 Lingers round the place,  
 And, oh! I feel the childhood charm,  
 That time cannot efface.  
 Then give me but my homestead roof,  
 I'll ask no palace dome;  
 For I can live a happy life.  
 With these I love at home.  
 Home again, &c.

Rev. Mr. Ercanbrack then offered a fervent and appropriate prayer, when the choir sang the following:

### LAND OF OUR FATHERS.

Land of our fathers, wheresoever we roam,  
 Land of our birth, to us thou still art home;  
 Peace and prosperity on thy sons attend,  
 Down to posterity, their influence descend.  
 All then inviting hearts and voices joining,  
 Sing we in harmony, our native land,  
 Our native land—our native land—our native land.

Though our climes may brighter hopes fulfill,  
 Land of our birth, we ever love thee still.  
 Heaven shield our happy homes, from each hostile land;  
 Freedom and plenty, ever crown our native land.  
 All then, &c.

The president then introduced to the audience, Dea. Nathan Bouton, who gave the following incidents of the

### *Early History of the Town of Virgil.*

FELLOW CITIZENS:—The duty assigned me by the committee, on this occasion, is one involving much labor and responsibility. The

collection of the facts and statistics to be embraced in the brief outline of the history of this Town, which I propose to give, has been attended, not only with considerable labor, but much obscurity has rested on some important points, owing to the fact that most of the early settlers have gone "the way of all the earth." By diligent inquiry, however, I have been able to arrive at a good degree of certainty, respecting all the particulars set forth in these remarks, and the hearer may rely upon them as substantially true. I have availed myself of the various sources of information within my reach, and am especially indebted for the introduction to "HORKISS' HISTORY OF WESTERN NEW YORK." I am to deal with primitive times, and if the language used should not be as elegant or modern as that of some of the speakers on this occasion, I hope the effort may be acceptable.

Previous to 1789, the county of Montgomery embraced all the western part of the State. In that year the county of Ontario was set off, comprehending that part of the State west of what was called the "preemption line." In 1791, the counties of Herkimer and Tioga were set off from Montgomery. The county of Onondaga, including the whole Military Tract, was set off from Herkimer in 1794. From Onondaga, Cayuga was detached in 1799, and Cortland in 1808. The Military Tract was so called, from the fact that it was set apart for the payment of military bounties to the soldiers of the State who had served in the army for a certain period during the war of the Revolution. This tract embraces the present counties of Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Cortland, the greater part of Tompkins, with small parts of Oswego and Wayne.

The Indian title being at length extinguished, an act was passed by the Legislature of the State, February 28, 1789, for surveying the land and appropriating it to the use of the soldiers. The Tract was surveyed into twenty-eight townships, each containing one hundred lots of a square mile each. Every soldier and non-commissioned officer of the State troops had one lot assigned him. The officers received larger portions in proportion to rank. Many of the soldiers, by reason of the long period which elapsed previous to the issuing of the patents and the many uncertainties connected with the subject, had sold their rights for a mere pittance, some, it is said, as low as eight dollars, so that they derived very little benefit from



the arrangement, and the way opened for much speculation and ultimately much litigation to settle titles. Many, however, lived to settle upon their lots, and thus secured to themselves a competence in old age, with an inheritance to descend after them to their children. The patents were issued in 1790, and preparations were soon made by those interested, to effect settlements on their lands.

The Township of Virgil is in the county of Cortland, and is one of the southern towns on the Military Tract. The whole of this Town does not belong to the Military Tract, as the tract called the "Massachusetts Ten Townships," comprehends about one and one-half mile in width across the south side, leaving, however, the Town nearly ten miles square. It is situated on the height of land between the St. Lawrence and Susquehanna rivers. The waters part here in less than a mile from where we are now assembled, and mingle with those of the broad Atlantic through the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Chesapeake Bay. The surface is variegated with hills and valleys, watered by numerous springs and smaller streams of water. The timber is rather heavy, consisting of maple, beech, elm, basswood, pine, hemlock and cherry. Some of the hills have considerable chestnut and oak, and interspersed through the whole is some white ash and birch. The soil is rather uniform—a medium between the best and poorest—and better adapted to grazing than tillage. The water is good, and most parts are remarkably well supplied for common purposes; but there are no large permanent streams adapted to the propelling of mills and machinery. The Tioughnioga runs through the northeast part of the Town, remote from the principal part of the population, and is not adapted to the objects to which allusion has been made. To facilitate the settlement of this section of the country, a road was projected, connecting Oxford with the Cayuga Lake, to pass through this Town. Joseph Chaplin, the first inhabitant, was entrusted with this work. The instrument by which he was authorized to engage in it was authenticated on the 5th of May, 1792. He spent that season in exploring and surveying the route, the length of which is about sixty miles. He came to lot No. 50, which he owned, and afterwards settled, erected a house and prosecuted his work, having a woman to keep the house and cook for workmen. The work of cutting and clearing the road was done in 1793-4; so that he moved his family from

Oxford over it in the winter 1794-5, employing six or seven sleighs freighted with family, furniture, provisions, &c.

In 1794, John M. Frank, who had a patent for lot No. 43, came to ascertain its location and condition. He came along lines of lots by marked trees, taking the present south line of the Town, upon which his lot was bounded, made his discoveries and returned. The next year he came, made a beginning in the forest, erected a house, returned to his family and made preparations to move on. He came from Montgomery to Cooperstown, then down the Susquehanna to Chenango Point, thence up the Chenango and Tioughnioga rivers to Chaplin's, thence on the State road to a point near where the village now is, thence southerly, passing near where Murdock's Tannery stands, and so on over the hill to near where Mr. Hotchkiss now lives, and then to the building he had erected. They arrived in November, 1795, after a journey of six weeks. And from that time till spring saw none but their own family. The man whom he had employed to move them in brought the family, and Mr. Frank came out on foot and drove seven head of cattle and six sheep. The sheep went away a little from the house a few days after their arrival, got out of sight and were never heard of after, and it was supposed that the wolves took them. The cattle were wintered on browse, and all lived except one yearling. Samuel Marvin, who moved the family, agreed further, that he would clear two acres and furnish the family with provisions for one year for three hundred acres off the east side of the lot, which agreements were mutually fulfilled. It is well to understand, that, though the patents were for the whole square mile, yet the State reserved to itself the right to retain one hundred acres in the southeast corner of each lot, and give an equal amount in Ohio, unless the person to receive the patent should give notice of his wish to have his land together, also charged the patentee eight dollars for surveying, and, in default of payment, reserved fifty acres in one corner, called the "Survey of fifty acres." Mr. Frank gave notice and saved the one hundred acres, but could not raise the eight dollars to save the fifty, though he offered a cow for the money, and also proposed to mortgage the whole lot in security; consequently the fifty acres were alienated, constituting part of the farm now owned by D. L. Bronson.

The next inhabitant was John Gee, also a soldier of the Revolution.

He drew lot No. 21, bounded west by the town of Dryden, on which some of his descendants now live. He came in 1795, and two others with him, bringing their provisions with them on foot from Chenango Point, guided by marked trees. They cut down the trees on a little spot, and built such a house as three men could, with only an axe, without a board, a nail or a pane of glass, and returned. He moved his family the next year from Wyoming, arriving on the 17th of June. The family consisted of his father and mother, his wife and six children, to live in a building about sixteen feet by twelve. And it may perhaps as well be said here as anywhere, that all the structures for inhabitants were made rude. Generally they were small, built up of logs, with a floor of plank split from basswood logs, door of the same, hung with wooden hinges, and the roof of bark peeled from elm or basswood, without chimney or glass window. This was the case with nearly all constructed previous to 1801, when the first Saw Mill was built. And I may also proceed to say in this place, that the farming utensils, household furniture, and all such necessaries and conveniences of life, were rude and clumsy. The bedsteads were not *French*, but *American*, consisting of four posts of round timber, with holes bored to receive the end and side rails, and bark drawn across instead of cords. The young children, of which the number was considerable in proportion to the population, were soothed to rest in sap-troughs and hollow logs for cradles. It was the lot of your speaker to enjoy the latter, vibrating on the plank floor before described. Trenchers or wooden plates were, in many instances used instead of earthen, &c. Other points of correspondence might be traced, but we will leave that to the imagination of our hearers. With Mr. Gee the neighbors were: J. Chaplin, at the river, about twelve miles by the road, J. M. Frank, four miles without road, and Ebenezer Brown, twelve miles west in Milton, now Lansing. The nearest grist mill was at Chenango Point, now Binghamton, and no store even there. His flour was brought up in a canoe to Chaplin's, and generally from there on foot. In 1798, Ludlow's mill was built at Ludlowville, which was a convenience to him and the very few others who had then settled in Town. It would not, however, "quit cost," or as we have it, "would not *pay*" to carry *corn* that distance to be ground, so they would burn a hollow place in the top of a stump and pound it in that with a pestle hung to a spring sweep.

In the Spring of 1797, John E. Roe came on from Ulster county, and made a beginning on his lot, the same occupied till recently by himself and family, boarding with Mr. Frank. He cleared a spot, put up the body of a log house, split plank and laid a floor, peeled bark for a roof and agreed with a man in Homer to put it on. He also cut and cured some of the wild grass growing in the swamp, for hay, and returned. Preparations were then made for moving on, which was done in the winter following. He and his wife came in a sleigh with a young cow following them. When they came to the river opposite Mr. Chaplin's they found the water high and the canoe that had been used in crossing, carried away. Mr. Chaplin's hog trough was procured and Mrs. Roe was safely carried over in it. She then stood upon the bank to await the crossing of what remained. The horses being urged in, swam across with the sleigh, the cow followed, and came near being carried away by the current, but after a hard struggle made the shore in safety. They put up for the night, the horses being fastened to the sleigh, as no accommodations could be procured; and they ate out the bottoms of the chairs, to allay the keen demands of appetite. The snow was two feet, with no track, and the whole day was consumed in coming from the river to their new home. When they arrived they were surprised to find their house without covering, consequently the snow as deep in it as out of it. Persons of less perseverance would have been disheartened. But no time was to be lost. The snow was cleared away from a portion of the floor, a fire built against the logs, some blankets drawn across the beams for a covering, the horses tied in one corner with some of the coarse hay before them, and thus their first and several successive nights were passed.

Thus in February, 1798, we find four families in the Town, separated by long distances from each other, almost without roads, suffering in many respects for the necessaries of life, exposed in their property and persons to the ravages of wild beasts, and far from sympathizing friends. But the dark, howling wilderness must be changed to fruitful fields, and these were the pioneers to lead on in this great work. Wild beasts were very numerous, especially *deer*. Mr. Roe has sat in his house and seen twenty-five pass in a drove, and Jonathan Gee has seen from six to eight browsing with the cattle at once. There were also many wolves and bears, and Mr. Roe

and Capt. Knapp caught and killed fifteen wolves in one year; and during the time when they were prevalent, Mr. Roe lost by them fifteen head of cattle and a large number of sheep. Their ravages were general, and subjected the inhabitants to the necessity of folding their sheep every night for about fifteen years. For a series of years the settlers suffered great hardships and privations, but they gradually diminished, so that in 1809 or '10 most of the necessaries of life were accessible to the mass of the people. Though I shall notice the progress of the settlements, I shall not be so minute in reference to particular families. To this number there was added in 1798, James Wright where Thomas Stanbro now lives, James Knapp where M. B. Mynard lives, James Glenny and John Glenny, near the residences of H. P. Jones and Thomas Hammond, Joseph Bailey where William Givens lives, and Wait Ball where J. C. Hutchings lives. In February, 1799, Enos Bouton settled where he remained while he lived; Dana Miles and others not now known, came in, so that in the year twenty-three men were taxed with highway labor. In 1800, we find James Sherwood, who settled on the ridge east from A. J. Brown's residence, James Wright, who settled near where Mrs. Byram lives, John Calvert, near where N. Chamberlain owns, Seth Larabee, near where Abram Oak lives, John Ellis where L. V. Terpenning lives, Moses Rice where Cephas Gleason lives, Abial Brown where Abijah Haight lives, Moses Stevens where Barnabas Tyler lives, Jason Crawford, on the river, and Primus Gaunt (colored) in that part now embraced in Lapeer. In 1801, Daniel Edwards settled where William Glenny lives, Nathaniel Bouton on the farm occupied by him during his life, and now by his son, Prince Freeman where Samuel N. Rounds lives, and James Clark and son where Joseph Colwell lives. In 1802, Jonathan Edwards settled where he lived the most of the rest of his life, Samuel Carson, near where Joseph Bouton lives, Alexander Hunter took the place of Joseph Bailey, George Wigant in a house near where J. Hancock's garden is, Abner and Ezra Bruce near the residence of L. V. Terpenning, and William Lincoln, a single man, came and has remained ever since, and is with us to-day. Peter Gray settled the same year on lot No. 70, (now Lapeer) and Robert K. Wheeler and Thomas Kingsbury in 1802 or '3; both in the same part. In 1803, Moses Olmstead settled where Josephus Gee lives, and Peter Powers and

John I. Gee settled also, in the west part, and Andrew Van Buskirk in the east part of the Town, and Dorastus Dewolf in the south part, (now Harford) on the hill west from the present village of that name. Seth Jennings and Timothy Robertson also settled in the part now Lapeer, in 1803 or '4. In 1804, Silas Lincoln settled where Salmon Curtis lives, and Alexander McNitt on lot No. 3, taking the place of James Wright, Obadiah Glazier near where Newman Barton lives; Lemuel Barnes, Peter Tanner and Thomas Nichols also settled the same year in the part now Harford, and Jeremiah Shevalier in the east part, near where his son John now lives.

In 1805, Simeon Luce settled on the hill that bears his name; Isaac Barton on land owned by Isaac B. Raymond; Jotham Glazier where Frederick Benton resides; Zophar Moore in this village; Oliver Ball at the present residence of M. B. Mynard; Isaac Elwell near where John Bouton lives. And at some time previous, of which we have not the date, Comfort Bruce, Shubel S. Marsh and James Roe came and took up their residence here. In 1806, John Hill settled where he lived afterwards, and where his family now live; John Green in the part now Harford; Zachariah Squires on lot No. 70, and Robert Smith bought the farm of Peter Gray, and lived there in that year; John Snider settled on the hill that bears his name, June 10th, 1807. Time will not, however, admit of our pursuing this course further. Inhabitants continued to come in from different parts, till, at the present time, there is very little non-resident land in the town. The early inhabitants did not settle on *prairie*, where they could raise their provisions the *first year*, but the heavy forest must be cleared away, which was a work of time, before the laborer could be fed from the soil he cultivated; and must wait a year or two more before he had grass for his cows, and they must run in the woods, and much time be spent in finding and bringing them home. And frequently they could not be found, especially if the search were commenced late, when they would have lain down and the tinkling of the bell could no more be heard. The milk was also of inferior quality, owing to the leeks and other weeds upon which they fed. Money was very scarce through the country, and particularly in the new parts where was little to be sold and much to be bought. It would be impossible to express to the understand-

ing of this, or any audience of modern times, the difficulties experienced on this account.

It was almost impossible to collect enough in the year to pay the taxes. This difficulty was very much owing, so far as the older parts were concerned, to the *Embargo* which was then in force, restricting commerce and causing a stagnation in all departments of business, and though the newly settled parts had not much to sell, they felt severely the effect of this state of things. We have seen the time when it would have been as difficult to raise *five dollars* as now it would be to raise as many hundred. Another difficulty existing in this Town particularly, was that the land was not owned by the inhabitants, but must be paid for from the products of the same to add to the capital of rich men living at a distance.

Another embarrassment was one to which allusion was made in the description of the natural features of the Town, viz.: the want of sufficient water power to propel mills and machinery, thus taking business away, and while other places were benefited, *this* Town was the loser. There was, however, a commendable degree of enterprise among the people, and the crops were, for a number of years, abundant, compared with the area of ground cultivated, and the people *relished highly what they had*. For example—we have the Sweet Bough, Red Astrachan and Red Margaret, (exhibiting a specimen of each) but neither of them tastes so delicious as some of those inferior apples first produced by our orchards.

Their hardships were also very much ameliorated by common participation and mutual sympathy. Hospitality prevailed and mutual dependence promoted harmony and fellow feeling. They met, exchanged accounts of their trials, often with much humor and pleasantry, and cheered each other on. If a log cabin was to be raised for some new-comer they were all on the spot with strong arms and a hearty good will.

But we must attend to, several branches of history in order.

#### FIRST—CIVIL REGULATIONS OR GOVERNMENT.

When first settled, Homer, Solon, Cincinnatus and Virgil were in one town called Homer.

At the Town Meeting in 1797, it was resolved that the Township of Virgil shall constitute one highway district.

In 1798, Virgil seems to have been represented, and James Knapp was chosen Assessor, Commissioner of Highways and Overseer of Highways, and returned eight names to be taxed for highway work. The poll tax was three days, and the number of days assessed was fifty-eight and one-half. At the Town Meeting in 1799, held at the house of Moses Hopkins, Virgil was honored with the office of Supervisor in the person of James Knapp; Wait Ball was chosen Assessor; John E. Roe, Overseer of the Poor; Wait Ball, Commissioner of Highways, and Dana Miles, Overseer of Highways, and returned twenty-three names to be taxed.

Thus this Town continued with Homer through the year 1804, always having its proper proportion of office and privilege.

The Township of Virgil having been set off from Homer into a separate town, the inhabitants assembled in Town Meeting at the house of James Knapp, on the 2d day of April, 1805, and proceeded to choose John I. Gee, Moderator; Gideon Messenger, Town Clerk; Moses Rice, Supervisor; Abner Bruce, John Gee and Joseph Chaplin, Assessors; John Glenny, George Wigant and John I. Gee, Commissioners of Highways; Jonathan Edwards and Peter Powers, Poor Masters, and Shubel S. Marsh, Constable and Collector.

PATH MASTERS.

1 John Gee,	5 Comfort Bruce,	9 Peter Powers,
2 Isaac Elwell,	6 Alexander McNitt,	10 Joseph Chaplin,
3 Samuel Carson,	7 Obadiah Glazier,	11 Elias Thompson,
4 Jonathan Edwards,	8 James Wright,	12 Peter Gray,
		13 Seth Jennings.

Moses Olmstead and Abial Brown, Fence Viewers.

Since the organization of the Town there have been forty-nine Town Meetings, at which the following persons have been elected Supervisors and Town Clerks, for the term specified respectively :

Moses Rice, Supervisor,	8 years,	Ogden Gray,	2 years,
James Roe,	4 years,	Enoch D. Branch,	1 year,
Gideon Messenger,	9 years,	Moses Tyler,	1 year,
Joseph Reynolds,	9 years,	John Green,	2 years,
Michael Frank,	2 years,	Dudley Benton,	1 year,
Sanford Bouton,	3 years,	Page Green,	1 year,
Josiah Hart,	1 year,	M. B. Mynard,	1 year,
Timothy Green,	3 years,	H. J. Messenger, now in office.	



## TOWN CLERKS.

Gideon Messenger,	2 years,	William Woodard,	4 years,
Abner Bruce,	2 years,	A. E. Heberd,	4 years,
Moses Rice,	2 years,	John Chamberlain,	2 years,
James Roe,	1 year,	Norinan Chamberlain,	4 years,
James Chatterton,	12 years,	Willard Chatterton,	3 years,
Alvan Ryan,	1 year,	Wait Chamberlain,	1 year,
William Snider,	1 year,	Samuel Slafter,	1 year,
Kinne Grow,	1 year,	D. L. Bronson,	1 year,
Willard Chatterton, now in office.			

James Glenny was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1802, and held the office several years. Wait Ball was soon after appointed to the same office, and continued in it for sixteen years in succession. Moses Rice also held that office for several years, about the same time. But our time will not admit of giving the names and terms of service of all who have been Justices of the Peace in the Town.

Joseph Reynolds, Josiah Hart, James Chatterton, Nathan Heaton, Platt F. Grow and Timothy Green have been Members of the Assembly of this State, and Joseph Reynolds has been Member of Congress one term.

## SECOND—THE RELIGIOUS INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE.

Soon after the first settlements were made, the people were visited by Missionaries who were faithful in looking to their spiritual welfare.

Among these were Rev. Messrs. Williston, Phelps and Johnson, Congregationalists, and Roots, Whipple and Cole, Baptists. There were also Methodist ministers, who came in at an early day and preached and otherwise labored to promote the spiritual good of the people. The Universalists, also had occasional meetings, when they were addressed by Rev. Archelaus Green, a resident of the Town.

The first religious meetings by the people were commenced in 1802. Prayers were offered by Prince Freeman, of this Town, and James Wood, of Dryden. Singing was conducted by Moses Rice, and sermons read by James Glenny. Since that time religious meetings have been held every Sabbath, except in case of some violent storm or remarkable event. On the 28th of February, 1805, the Congregational Church was formed with eight members, (one of whom, Mrs. L. Edwards, is still living,) by Rev. Seth Williston.

The church was without stated preaching, several years. They felt severely their destitute condition, which will be seen by the following vote passed December 3d, 1806: "That the church will see to the satisfying of Rev. Dr. Darrow for two Sabbaths' service a year, at five dollars a Sabbath, to attend on sacramental occasions, and also to take the oversight of the church for the present." The church struggled on through various difficulties, with preaching part of the time, meeting in various places where they could, after the "Centre School House" was burnt, in 1818, till this house could be used for that purpose. This house was put up in 1821, but it was two or three years before it was enclosed and made comfortable, and the present seats were not built till 1831. Its location, near the burying ground, was found inconvenient, and removed to this place in 1834. About two hundred and seventy persons have been added to the church, and it now embraces about seventy resident members. The ministers who have preached stately to the church, are Rev. Messrs. Wallace, Hitchcock, Dunning, Robertson, Bliss, Chaffee, Headley, Walcott, Thacher, Bronson and Bates. Among these Messrs. Robertson, Chaffee and Thacher were pastors.

A Baptist Church was constituted in August, 1807. They held meetings in private houses, etc., and had preaching from Elders Bennett, of Homer, Powers and Robinson, and others of this place till about 1826 or '27, when it was disbanded, and reorganized June 23d, 1830. In 1831, their present meeting house was built. The ministers preaching steadily since its reorganization, have been Elders Andrews, Robinson, Clark, Ainsworth, Cole, Jones, Lyon and DeWitt. Present number of members, sixty-nine.

The Methodists held meetings frequently, and had preaching from Rev. G. W. Densmore and others, previous to 1830. In that year there was much interest among them, and many were added to their number. In 1831, the chapel was built, and they have had as preachers since 1830, Rev. Messrs. Mason, Wood, Bronson, Harris, Meneir, Worthing, Hamilton, Porter, McDowell, Fox, Wire, Mynard, Hewitt, Torry and Ercanbrack. They have about seventy-two members.

The Free Baptist Church in the west part of the Town was organized in 1822, with six members. They held meetings in "Ball's School House," so called, till they built their present meeting house,

often called "The West Meeting House," in 1838. Its preachers have been Elders Daniels, Hills, Darling, Gardner, Dodge, Moulton, and others. The number of members at this time is eighty-three.

In about 1834, the Universalists formed a society, which increased to about thirty members, and continued their organization and meetings several years. Among the preachers who labored stably with them, were Revs. Brown, Sanderson, Doolittle, Brown, Foster and Bullard.

In the southwest part, now Harford, the first preaching was by Rev. Seth Williston in 1804. Preaching by Methodist ministers in 1806 or '7.

The Baptists formed a church in that part about 1818, which has been ministered to by Elders Robinson, Miller, Gibbs and others. This church has always been small, though we are unable to give its numbers.

The Methodists have had meetings and an organization in the same locality, and have participated in the erection of the meeting house, and have at times been prosperous.

The Christians were organized into a church about 1828, and have held their meetings in the vicinity of South Harford. They have had stated preaching by Elders Rouse, Gould, Dodge, Holiday, Grimes, Wade, Burlingame, Wescott, Hitchcock and others. Number of members we are unable to state.

The Congregational Church, of Harford, was organized September 28, 1831, with thirteen members; and in 1832, a house of worship was built by that society, in connection with the Methodists and Universalists. They have had stated preaching by Rev. Messrs. Ripley, Gaylord, Baker and Lord; and in 1846, when the Town was set off, had fifty-four members.

The Universalists formed a society in about 1831, which has numbered as high as forty-three members. They aided in building the house of worship above alluded to, and own a part of it. They have had stated preaching from Rev. Messrs. Chase, Doolittle, Whiston, Barry, Rounsville, Brown and others.

A church of Free or Open Communion Baptists, was formed in the southeast part of the Town, in about 1820, by Elder Lake, embracing members also residing in Marathon and Lisle. Their preachers have been Elders Lake, Hart and Matthews. The number of

members rose at one time to nearly eighty. The Methodists had frequent meetings near the centre of that quarter of the Town, and have had at times, considerable religious interest among them. We are not able, however, to state their numbers.

There is also a church of the Christian order in that part, holding their meetings in the school house near Dann C. Squires'. They have been ministered to by Elder Hitchcock and others,—we cannot state their numbers.

There was also a church organized in the east part of the Town in about 1830, of the Congregational order by Rev. Eleazar Luce. It was ministered to by Rev. Messrs. Luce, Axtell, Chaffee and others; and in 1837, had thirty-one members. It has since been dissolved. The Methodists have also long had a branch of their church in East Virgil, and have had preaching a portion of the time. In 1844, a house of worship was erected at the place called Gridley Hollow, by the union of the several denominations residing in that vicinity. The years 1813, '20, '30 and '31, were signalized as seasons of special religious interest, and many were added to the different churches.

The first infants baptized, were Betsey N. and Sylvester M. Roe, by Rev. W. Mandeville, in the autumn of 1802. The first adult was Mrs. Zeruah, wife of Peter Powers, in 1803, by Elder Whipple. In common with other localities there have been societies with us for the promotion of the various benevolent objects of the day,—such as Bible, Missionary and Tract Societies. These have been successful in a good degree, in promoting the several objects for which they were instituted, and it may be safely estimated that the Bible Society has been instrumental in keeping the families in Town supplied with the Bible by means of funds received from its inhabitants.

#### LAW.

And here we have to confess that there never has been resident in Town a regularly bred *lawyer*, but we have had those that have been able to advocate the rights of the people before the courts in Town, and some in other places. James Wright, a revolutionary soldier, was the first who acted in this capacity, and since his time there has been several who have engaged in that business; and now we have Messrs. Green and Grow, who are probably the ablest advo-

cates in that department that we have ever had.

#### MEDICAL.

The first physician was Elijah Hartson. Since he left we had in this part of the Town, Drs. Moore, Green, Worden, Woods and Ryan, before 1820. Dr. Bronson came in 1820, and has been here ever since, except the short time he was at Vernon. During that time Dr. C. P. Weaver was here, and from 1841 to '48 we had Drs. Wilson and Robinson. Now our three physicians are Drs. Bronson, Fitch and Ball. The physicians in the part now Harford, have been Fox, Owen, Terry, Houghteling, Davis, Shipman and others.

#### EDUCATION.

The inhabitants were early awake to the importance of education, and were resolved that their children should have all the means in their power to provide for its acquisition. Accordingly in 1799, the few that were here came together and built a school house near where the *Thorn Tree* now stands, easterly from the residence of J. C. Hutchings. The first teacher was Charles Joyce, who taught two or three weeks. Another named Hatch, continued a short time, and left suddenly. Next Rebecca Ball, daughter of Wait Ball, taught two summers. After her, Abigail, sister to Rebecca, was employed one term. The first school near the village was taught by Mrs. L. Edwards in her own house. Afterwards Moses Rice taught in the Remington house in the winter of 1804-5. The first school taught in the part now Harford, was by Betsey Curran in the winter of 1806-7, in the house of Abner Rounsville.

The Legislature had appropriated one lot in this Town to the support of the gospel and schools, and when the school law took effect in 1813, the rent was added to the funds derived from the State, and has since been available for this purpose. In that year William Powers, Oliver Ball and Gideon Messenger, School Commissioners, divided the Town into seven school districts. The first grammar school was taught in 1819 by Henry J. Hall, in the east part of the double log house of John I. Gee, located were T. L. Lincoln, Esq., now lives. This was the first effort of systematic instruction in that science in the Town. It continued four weeks with thirteen scholars. Their names were Beebe L. Ball, Stephen S. Powers, James Ball, John M. Roe, John Harris, William L. Gee, Nathan Bouton,

Rufus and Harriet Edwards, Lemira Byram, Marietta Chaplin and Sally and Lucy Messenger. Of this number eight are living by latest accounts, and four are present.

From 1837 to 1845, a school called the "Literary Institute," was taught one-half of each year by N. Bouton and William E. Gee, which was in a good degree successful. It was afterwards continued about two years by A. F. Frye. Other select schools have been taught since at different times. There have also been such schools in the part now Harford. One by Erving Taintor, and another by a lady, some time afterwards. There was also a select school taught by Jesse Storrs in the part now Lapeer, which continued several terms. There was a great scarcity of reading matter in the early settlement. Newspapers were scarce and dear; the usual price \$2 per annum, with less than half the reading matter we now have, at double the price. (The speaker here exhibited a copy of a county paper published in 1829, with five columns on a page.) To remedy this defect, in part, the inhabitants set up a library called the "Virgil Library," with thirty shares of one dollar each, and a very good selection of books was procured in about 1807. Another library was established about 1814, with a capital of \$200, called the "Virgil Union Library." At present the necessity for such libraries is superceded by their establishment in each school district. Books and papers are also plenty and cheap.

The first Sabbath School was instituted in 1822, in connection with the Congregational Church. Since that time Sabbath schools have been conducted in the different churches and neighborhoods with various degrees of success to the present time.

Allusion has been made to the kind of cradles in which some of us were lulled to rest in our infancy, but it is not to be presumed that it was always done without a lullaby. Probably none of us can remember that used for ourselves, but the singing that made the first permanent impression on the mind of the speaker, was the following words:

Where shall our country turn its eye?  
 What help remains beneath the sky?  
 Our friend, protector, strength and trust,  
 Lies low and mouldering in the dust.

This is a part of the lamentation of a bereaved people, at the death of the Father of his Country. When individuals met who

could sing they frequently engaged in this exercise, when the associations connected with it would lead their minds back to the place of their nativity, and bring up affecting remembrances of precious friends and scenes long past. The first Singing School was taught by Moses Rice, in the winter of 1805-6. Since that time this department of science and mental and moral improvement has received much attention, and we, to-day, enjoy the rich privilege of listening to delightful music in words eminently adapted to this thrilling occasion. The sacred music of this place is now in the care of Messrs. Slafter, Adamy and Sheerar.

The department of roads now claims our attention. The first road passing through the Town, was the "State Road." A road was slightly cut through from near this Village, in the direction of the head of the lake, called the "Bridle Road." The next was one laid from the State Road, commencing near the present dwelling house of William Bell, and taking a northeasterly direction till it intersected the road from Port Watson to Solon, laid July 2d, 1798. The next from the State Road on lot No. 24, southwesterly to near where the "West Meeting House" now is, and turned and went over to John Gee's, and continued on to the State Road. Soon after, a road was laid from the State Road, near the residence of L. V. Terpenning, past where Hiram Lament lives, and came out on the present road, near Thomas Stanbro's, and continued on to Homer. In 1801, this road was altered and run nearly where it now is, past Purvis', Morse's, etc. About the same time a road was laid from where the Village now is, southerly over Owego Hill, and the road leading from Mr. Frank's nearly as it now runs, intersecting the road leading to Gee's at the West Meeting House, was laid soon afterwards. The road from Cortlandville to Virgil, where it now is, was laid in 1806, and that over Luce Hill nearly at the same time. The State Road from Chaplin's this way was rather rugged, and it early occurred to the inhabitants that much of the hill might be saved by a road that might be constructed from the State Road near the residence of Daniel Price, passing down the stream to Vanderburg's mill, continuing on past the saw mill of A. Van Buskirk, intersecting the State Road near the house of Joseph Chaplin. This road was laid in 1818, through to the grist mill. This road required much labor and expense to make it passable, and must neces-

sarily be a work of time. It was, however, cut and worked through, so that it was traveled in 1833, and remains a lasting monument to the energy and perseverance of Reuben Gridley, who was principally instrumental in its construction, though aided very much by funds appropriated by the Town.

Previous to 1808 there was no Post Office in Town, and all intelligence was transmitted by means of distant offices, or sent by individuals who might be going in the direction desired, which was attended with much delay and uncertainty. In that year a post office was established, and Zophar Moore appointed Post Master, and the mail was carried for some time by a man traveling on foot; afterwards it was carried on horseback for several years. An office was established in the southwest part of the Town, in 1825 or '26, first named Worthington, afterwards changed to Harford, and Theodore E. Hart was appointed Post Master. An office was also located in the east part, called East Virgil, in 1845, and William Gray appointed Post Master.

#### MILITARY.

Among the early settlers a large portion were soldiers of the French and Revolutionary wars. Derosel Gee, Thomas Nichols and John Smith were engaged in the French war, so called, of 1754-'63. The following are names of the Revolutionary soldiers who have lived in the Town:

Joseph Bailey,	Silas Lincoln	Stephen Kelly,
John Gee,	Jason Crawford,	Oliver Hopkins,
Seth Larabee,	David Robinson,	William Parker,
John M. Frank,	Altamont Donaldson,	David Crowell,
Dana Miles,	Abner Baker,	Robert Smith,
James Knapp,	Isaac Tillotson,	Nathan Smith,
James Wright,	Moses Stevens,	Henry Turck,
Nicholas Brown,	George Barlow,	Nathan Walker,
Robert Ryan.	Simeon Leroy,	Timothy Robertson,
John Smith,	Jeremiah Chase,	Samuel Sole,
James Sherwood,	John Stanbro,	Asa Parker,
Enoch Smith,	Cornelius Lament,	Thomas Nichols,
John Snider,	Elisha Brewer,	Lemuel Barnes,
Thomas Russell,	Thomas Kingsbury,	Joel Morten,
Seth Bouton,	Adam Kingman,	John Green,
George Totman,	Moses Rice,	Benjamin Glazier,
Elias Thomson,	David Darling,	Jonathan Skeel,
Epaphras Shelden.		



Of these Jeremiah Chase, Simeon Leroy, George Totman, Joel Morten, John Gee, Elisher Brewer, Cornelius Lament, John Stanbro, Enoch Smith, Thomas Kingsbury and Stephen Kelly, were living in Town in 1840. Of this number John Gee is now the only survivor.

The scenes of the war through which they had recently passed were fresh in their minds, and it is not strange that much of a military spirit should exist among the people. Consequently the call for the performance of military duty was soon made, and the call was responded to by five men, of whom Gideon Messenger was one, going to Homer to train under Captain Moses Hopkins. Captain Hopkins had previously held lower rank, but had exerted himself to get up a company of forty-five, by enlisting old men and boys to obviate the necessity of going to Marcellus to attend company drills. Soon the soldiers in Virgil were permitted to train in Town, and the first meeting for that purpose was held at the house of James Knapp, where M. B. Mynard now lives, under the command of Captain John Ellis, afterwards Judge Ellis, of Dryden. The Captains after him were successively, Abial Brown, James Wright, Geo. Wigan and Joseph Chaplin. The company was then divided, and William Lincoln commanded the east company, and Enoch Allen the west. This was the condition of the military interest at the commencement of the war of 1812-'15. Levies of troops were made and the companies in this Town were called on for five or six men. In the west company a sufficient number enlisted,—their names were John Russell, Moses Woolfeen and Henry Green. The east company drafted for three, and John E. Roe, Daniel Price and Ira Lincoln were drawn. John E. Roe procured a substitute. Daniel Price went and served three months, and Ira Lincoln was excused on account of ill health. At another muster David Snider was drawn and went, serving three months, the usual time for militia. There have also been living in the Town several others who were soldiers in that war. Among these were Joel Hancock, Edmund H. Robinson, Jacob Bronson, Barnabas Baker, Zachariah Low, John D. Barnes, Thomas Foster, Ezekiel Miller, Reuben Gridley, John Fisher, Isaac Ayers, Gurdin Hall, Daniel Short, Uriah Harvey, Joseph Miller, Joseph Terwillegar and Edward Griswold. There was a company of aged men and invalids organized in 1813, after the example set in the time of the Revolution. Of this company Simeon West was Captain, John S. Squires, Lieutenant, and William Powers, Ensign.

The Town was afterwards divided into four companies, out of which there has also been for most of the time an independent company. A company of riflemen was raised in about 1813, of which Joseph Reynolds was the first Captain. This company was afterwards disbanded. A company of artillery was organized in 1828-'29, of which Michael Frank was the first Captain. It continued prosperous for several years, but was ultimately disbanded. Afterwards a company of infantry was raised, and John W. Morse was the first captain in uniform. This company was discontinued when military duty ceased to be called for.

#### MILLS, MACHINERY, ETC.

The first Saw Mill was built by Daniel Edwards, in 1801, nearly on the ground where Murdock's tannery is located. The first Grist Mill was built near where Tyler's mill now is, by Peter Vanderlyn and Nathaniel Knapp, in 1805. Hutching's grist mill, in the edge of Dryden, was built in 1809—mentioned because this Town was much interested in it. Previous to the building of mills in Homer and in this Town, several individuals practiced going to Ludlow's and carrying their grist upon their backs. Among these were Joseph Bailey and Enos Bouton. After a few years, and when these mills were built, persons could go with a horse, get grinding done and return the same day; and the yellow horse of Mr. Luce has been known to pace off the hill six times in a week, for the family and neighbors. About 1814 or '15, Abner Bruce built a grist mill where the spring mill now is, owned by T. Green. It was burnt down in 1820, and rebuilt in a year or two. In 1827 it was bought by Josiah Byram, and occupied by him for carding and cloth dressing till his death, in 1842. It has since been fitted up at considerable expense, for a grist mill, and is doing a good business, and the owner deserves credit for his enterprise and perseverance. A grist mill was built in 1814, by Nathan Heaton, in the south part of the Town, now called South Harford. A grist mill was also built in the east part in 1819, by a Mr. Vanderburg, which has done considerable business. Harvy Jennings also built a grist mill in the southeast part, near Orrin Day's, in 1833, which did some business till it was burnt in 1842.

The first wool carding by machinery was done by C. Baker, at his mill, (now Tyler's) in about 1814. In 1819, Henry Burgess com-

menced wool carding and cloth dressing near the same place, taking water from the same dam. His building was afterwards removed to near the place now occupied for the same purpose, by H. P. Jones. In 1827, Josiah Byram commenced the same business in the building bought of Abner Bruce, as before mentioned.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS, ETC.

The first child born in Town, was JOHN, a son of Joseph Chaplin, who was drowned in the spring of 1798, aged two years. The first who lived to mature age was John Frank, one of our guests, in autumn, 1797. Next to him was James Gee, in March, 1798; Betsey N. Roe and B. F. Chaplin, in February, 1799, and Hiram Ball and Hiram Bouton, in the same year.

The first marriage, as nearly as we can ascertain, was solemnized between Ruluff Whitney, of Dryden, and Susan, daughter of John Glenny, of this Town, as early as 1800. In the autumn of 1801, Truman Terry was married to Rebecca, daughter of Wait Ball.

The first death was that of a stranger passing through, who undertook to go from Ebenezer Brown's, in Milton, (now Lansing,) to Chaplin's, at the river. He became fatigued, lost his way, lay down with his pack under his head and died. This was in April, 1798, and only four or five persons could be got together. George Frank was present at the scene, and is also with us here to-day. They placed some timbers about him, for a protection from wild beasts, and left him. One of their number went to Homer to make the case known to Solomon Hubbard, Esq., and ask direction. His advice was, that, as there was no Coroner nearer than Pompey, the few inhabitants should get together and make such examination as they were able, and proceed accordingly. The next day they assembled and had as much of an examination as was practicable in the circumstances, concerning the cause of his decease, and it was agreed as before stated. They took some boards brought into Town by John E. Roe, for the purpose of making a table, and fastening them together in the form of a box, placed him in it and buried him in the grave which they had dug, and now his bones lie mouldering somewhere between this place and Timothy Green's, near the hill. His son came subsequently, said his father's name was Charles Huffman, and took some shoemaker's tools found with him at his death. The first death of an adult resident was that of Mary, wife of Derosel

Gee and mother of John Gee, in March, 1802. Exercises at the funeral were singing and prayer.

Previously to 1806, when the public burying ground was decided to the Town by George Wigant, persons were buried on the premises where they died. The first grave-stone was erected to the memory of James Roe, Esq., in about 1823.

#### TEMPERANCE, ANTI-SLAVERY, ETC.

The first distillery was erected in 1803 or '4, by James Wright. Intemperance prevailed, as in other places, till in 1829, six distilleries were in operation. The moral and philanthropic in the community became alarmed and inquired with solicitude what could be done to stay its ravages. Temperance societies began to be formed in different parts, and the inhabitants of this place, on consultation, agreed to meet and form a Temperance Society. The Fourth of July, 1829, was chosen as the time to organize such Society, and Michael Frank, our guest, to give the address, at the close of which a society was formed with about twenty members. And here let us pause and drop a tear in memory of our early, cordial friend and associate, Beebe L. Ball, the first President of that society, and while he lived, its firm, judicious and ardent supporter. In 1831, a society was instituted in that part now Harford; and one on Luce Hill, and another on Snider Hill, about the same time. The temperance cause has been promoted since, by various means and with great labor and expense, and much progress has been made, but much remains to be done before its triumph will be complete.

About the year 1832, several individuals became much aroused on the subject of Slavery. Their number was small,—the subject was one of great difficulty, but they read and diffused information on the subject, and acted according to their convictions. The cause progressed slowly, as every great reform must, till in 1844, the Liberty Party gave their candidate for the Presidency ninety-nine votes. Since that time various changes have taken place in the aspects of the cause, and great progress has been made.

#### SECULAR EMPLOYMENTS.

Agriculture, the foundation of all, has engaged the attention of most of the people. They have been employed in clearing away the forest and cultivating the earth, which has generally yielded good

return. The implements used were those incident to the time. The plows were of the common rude kind till the year 1817, when the first cast iron plow was brought in and used by Esq. Ball. Some of the first settlers, of whom John M. Frank was one, cleaned their grain by throwing it across the barn floor with a small scoop shovel, and afterwards shaking it up in a hand fan made of a hollow log, when the refuse parts were brushed off with a quill. Afterwards a willow fan and riddle were used. It was very important that the grain should be cleaned, as there were no means of taking out dust at the mills, as there are now. Fanning mills soon came to be used; the first, however, that is recollected was about the year 1809. Considerable grain of the several kinds has been raised, and for some years past much attention has been given to the dairy, which in 1851, brought in a return of \$25,000. Some of the people in an early day directed their attention to the cultivation of fruit, especially apples. Very soon after his first settlement, Joseph Chaplin sowed the seeds for a nursery of natural fruit, and Enos Bouton did the same soon after, and most of the oldest orchards are from these nurseries. The first nursery of grafted fruit was put out by Nathaniel Bouton, about 1808, and Oliver Ball did the same soon after.

The first barrel of cider made in Town, was by Enos Bouton, in 1818 or '19. The apples were bruised by a pestle hung to a spring sweep like that referred to in pounding corn. The pomace was pressed by a lever placed under a log, passing over the cheese, with a weight at the other end. It was sold for four dollars.

The first Merchant was Daniel Shelden, in about 1807 or '8. Next was Samuel L. Shelden, and next after him, Gideon Messenger. While he was in trade Joseph Reynolds set up a store in the village, since which there have been two stores in the village most of the time. William Snider, Hiram Bouton, G. V. Knapp, A. E. Heberd, Rufus Edwards and others have engaged in this business; and now we have the firm of Winslow & Slafter, and William Snider. The first in the part now Harford was Theodore E. Hart, in June, 1824. In the part called East Virgil, William Gray set up a store in 1834, and most of the time since there have been two stores in that vicinity. The early merchants carried wheat and other articles to Albany in wagons, and brought back such goods as the people could afford to buy. Doubtless they sometimes took money with them, but the

sums must have been small. The mercantile interest has continually increased to the present time, so that in 1851 it was estimated that goods were sold at the stores in this Village to the amount of \$30,000. It will be understood that this is but a portion of the purchases of the people in Town, as there are stores in other parts, and much trading—*too much* for the good of the people—is done out of Town.

Slight mention has been made of some of our exports. In addition to these we may be permitted to add that of barley, oats, eggs, and for many years past a large amount of oats has been carried to Ithaca, Syracuse and other places. It was rumored in the autumn of 1812 that oats could be exchanged at Ithaca for iron and other necessaries, and after much preparation and in the presence of several neighbors who came to offer their congratulations, an ox team set out for that place with a load, one Friday afternoon, and returned late on Saturday evening. Since that time a large amount of the article has been transported. This crop, however profitable it may be, is very exhausting to the soil, and we must abandon its cultivation for export, and direct our attention to the cultivation of other produce.

It would be desirable to speak of the different mechanical departments with their origin and progress, but as their beginnings were very small, and in most instances involved in obscurity, and were the result of stern necessity, it may be best not to make the attempt.

We will, however, state that the first frame building of much size, was the large house now standing on the elevation in this Village, owned by Shubel G. Ball, erected in 1804, by James Knapp, very much astonishing the natives, and with other causes ruining the man that built it. The first well of much depth was that near it, of more than forty feet deep, dug about the same time, and in which Seth Larabee, one of our citizens, came near losing his life, by its caving in.

The land surveying of the Town has been done by different individuals, as Wait Ball and James Roe, who commenced almost with its first settlement. Afterwards Daniel L. Allen and Hiram Ball, and very recently Abiather Briggs have done business in this line; and in this vicinity for the last thirty years most of it has been done by the speaker.

## REMARKABLE EVENTS.

Several events have transpired that have caused great sensation for a time, and made a lasting impression on many minds. The first was that of a boy lost in the woods. In May, 1796, Daniel Chaplin, son of Joseph Chaplin, and father of Mrs. Gleason, now present, aged about fourteen years, set out to drive a cow to Mr. Frank, and took with him a few pounds of flour. The cow became refractory and turned out of the road, and in endeavoring to get her back he lost the road and wandered in the trackless wilderness. The cow returned home, thus giving notice that he was lost. An alarm was given and about fifty men assembled, which was a great number for so sparse a population. He was gone four days and three nights without food, and was found on the "Bridle Road," in Dryden, by Aaron and James Knapp, of Homer. They ascertained who he was, and proceeded to help him home. He had the flour with him, but the weather having been rainy, it had become mouldy and they threw it away. He was very faint and weak, but being supported on each side he could walk, and they arrived at his father's house about midnight, where his mother had about thirty men in and about the house, and was preparing victuals for them to take in their search on the morrow. Mr. Chaplin was absent at the time. We shall not make the vain attempt to paint the scene, but leave it to our hearers to imagine the feelings of that mother, and the sensation caused by his arrival.

The next to be noticed was the great eclipse of the sun on the 16th of June, 1806, which, though not peculiar to this Town, made a deep impression, and was an event from which many others have been reckoned. Another event which produced general solemnity, was that of a sweeping sickness, which occurred in the winter and spring of 1813. In a very few weeks four heads of families\* in that thin population were removed by death. Their names were James Roe, Esq., Jacob Chatterton, William Gee, and Lydia, wife of Benjamin Glazier.

During the present year a death has occurred in Harford, once Virgil, of an individual which it would be well to notice in this connection. It was that of Henry Ballard, at the very advanced age of one hundred and nine years. It remains to notice that the season of 1816 was very unfruitful, generally denominated the *cold*

*season*, followed by great scarcity of provisions, etc. In 1821 there was much suffering on account of scarcity of food for stock, and it was also a time of great pecuniary embarrassment. In 1836-'37 there was also a scant supply of provisions and a time of derangement in pecuniary matters, resulting from the insane speculations immediately preceeding, in which many engaged with that recklessness characteristic of those in haste to be rich. It is unnecessary to say that these last were events common to the whole country, and affecting this Town only as a constituent part of the same.

Frequent allusion has been made to the division of the Town. It had long been evident to discriminating minds that this event must take place at some time, but the different interests involved and the condition of political parties delayed it till 1846. It was then divided into three towns; the north half constituted one and retained the original name. The south half was formed into two; the west part receiving the name of Harford, and the east that of Lapeer. Since that time a part of Virgil has been set to Cortlandville, and another part consisting of lot No. 20, has been attached to Freetown. Thus Virgil, from being one-fourth part of one town in 1796, has become the whole of three, and a part of two others. The population has increased from thirty in 1798, to 4541 in 1845, and 2410 in 1850, after the division. Stock taken on the Syracuse and Binghamton railroad amounts to \$11,100. Other statistics have been given in their proper places.

It may be our duty, as it is certainly a pleasure, to advert briefly to the names of numerous individuals who emigrated from this Town, as well as to some who remain in it, as by their varied talent, intelligence and usefulness, doing honor to the place of their birth, or where they spent their childhood and youth and received most of their education. We rejoice to greet our guests at this "Festive Gathering," as among the number to whom allusion has been made. We have among them Colonel Frank, a native of this Town, who has exerted a great and salutary influence in the State of his adoption. Not a State when he emigrated thither, but a Territory where laws were to be enacted, forms of government adopted and the foundations of prosperity laid in the institutions to be founded and perpetuated in that wide region that must eventually bear great sway in our national councils. He has done much to promote the cause of education and



to ameliorate the condition of the indigent. And being one of the three individuals appointed to revise the statutes of the State, those relating to common schools and support of the poor were particularly assigned to him, and bear strong evidence of his intelligence and philanthropy. We have here Judge Reynolds, who, though past the season of youth when he settled here, spent many years with us, and during a large portion of the time sustained the reputation of a prompt, intelligent and impartial Justice of the Peace, and was also Judge of the County Court.

We have also with us Drs. Hyde, Frank and Benton, who have respectively arrived at a good degree of eminence in their profession where they reside. Here are also John M. Roe, the successful merchant; William Woodard, the ready accountant; William E. Gee, the persevering and successful instructor of youth; R. O. Reynolds, the talented and eloquent attorney, and Horace L. Green, a young and promising practitioner at law in Marathon. In addition to this we may say that Dr. Bronson, yet a resident here, has practiced his profession to general acceptance more than thirty years, and has had six students of medicine, all of whom have been successful in practice where they have been located, viz.: William Hunter, in Jasper, Steuben county; James Ball, in Michigan; Marsena Terry, in Savanna, Steuben county; J. W. Jones, at Horseheads, Chemung county; Frederick Hyde, in Cortland village, and John B. Benton, in Spencer, Tioga county. The two latter are among our guests to whom reference has been made. To this list we may add the names of Dr. Shevalier, of Truxton; George Graham, of Jasper, Steuben county, the intelligent and persevering advocate of education and temperance; Theodore E. Hart, the successful merchant and banker, of Canandaigua, and many others. Honorable mention should also be made of Carlo M. Woods, son of Dr. Woods, who died when he was very young, leaving him a slender child to struggle with poverty and the various difficulties incident to his condition. He was a studious and successful scholar, learned the trade of a printer, went to Illinois, set up a paper published in Quincy, and has since been clerk of Adams county, and is now clerk of the Supreme and District Courts of Quincy District. We may be pardoned if we allude to the name of one, long a resident here, now sleeping in the dust—Nathaniel Bouton, the projector of the

New York and Erie railroad, who continued to advocate the same till an influence was awakened that resulted in its construction and completion. This Town has furnished, at least, two individual youth who have attended through a course of instruction in the State Normal School, and have prosecuted their studies with a degree of self application and success, creditable to themselves and gratifying to their friends. The persons to whom reference has been made are A. P. Smith, present with us, and Sabrina Chamberlain, now in Ohio. It is, however, a delicate matter to speak of persons in Town, and to discriminate between those perhaps equally meritorious, and as there has been as much presented as could reasonably be expected, it only remains for me to take affectionate leave of the audience, deeply grateful for the patient and kind attention given during the long time occupied with this address.

At the close of Mr. Bouton's address, the choir sang the following:

### FAREWELL; TO-NIGHT WE PART.

Our happy homes of childhood days,

We now remember well;

And memory often fondly strays,

To where it used to dwell.

Hurrah! hurrah! la, la, la, la, la, la;

May music gladden every heart;

Hurrah! hurrah! la, la, la, la, la, la;

Farewell, farewell, to night we part.

Those joyous hours of childish life,

Were pleasanter by far,

Than scenes like these with pleasures rife,

Where friends and strangers are.

Hurrah, etc.

From friendly throngs in stranger land,

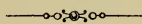
A few fond hearts we find;

Yet can they cheer this little band,

Like homes we've left behind.

Hurrah, etc.

## Afternoon Exercises.



**A**FTER dinner the assembly repaired to the hall, when the President of the day took the chair, supported by Vice-Presidents J. W. Morse, Rufus Edwards, Horace Bronson and Joel Hancock. The President then announced that the meeting was in order, and called on Dr. Hyde to offer some remarks adapted to the occasion, who arose and addressed the meeting as follows:

**MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:**—I regret that it is not my privilege to claim, in common with my warm friends assembled around me on this festive occasion, this portion of earth as the place of my nativity.

So large a portion of the events of my youth occurred in your Town that it would be strange should I not share liberally with you in the ebullition of warm-heartedness so characteristic of this signal meeting. It has been my fortune to have mingled somewhat in public assemblages, but I am quite certain that in all my life I never witnessed such spontaneous out-gushings of happy feelings as flow through this kindred gathering. It is here that heart beats to heart, voice responds to voice, and even the big tears well profusely out from their fountains as the friendly and long stranger-hand goes forth unbidden to grasp with firm clench its kindred. I would, therefore, that my words could give utterance to the feeling of my heart, and proclaim with my friends here, that these beautiful and majestic old hills, which so grandly begirt the green plain on which we are assembled, were mine, too, by birth.

There is a holy charm which hovers around one's birth-place which cannot be resisted. Sir, while fraternizing so liberally with this joyous group, it produces in me a vivid renewal of all the sacred associations which cluster around my own dear native earth-spot. But a little way over these eastern hills, and down the valley of the limpid

and curling Tioughnioga to its junction with its more eastern and quiet tributary—the Otselic—is the spot of all others the most precious to me, the earliest home of my birth. I never near this hallowed place, but my heart throbs with emotions which compel me to linger and look on this small but precious item of earthly heritage, and the scenery around it, with increasing pleasure.

I will not trespass further upon the precious moments of this interview, as they are more properly yours than mine, but will ask permission, before I take my seat, to introduce the following letter received from your former fellow-townsmen, Dr. Marsena Terry.

SAVANNA, August 15th, 1853.

*Dr. Hyde:*

DEAR SIR:—Your kind invitation to attend a “Jubilee” at Virgil, on the 25th of August, inst., was duly received. I wish here to assure you of my hearty co-operation and approval of the sentiments, and that nothing would be more consonant with my feelings than the opportunity of meeting, and that, too, at Virgil,—within the immediate circle of my nativity, my old friends of that Town, whose acquaintance I still cherish and hold in high esteem.

And while I desire to express to you my thanks for this courteous and friendly invitation, I am compelled to acknowledge a total inability to fulfill my ardent desires to be among you. May you have a good time, a great time, and a time altogether.

Respectfully yours,  
M. TERRY.

I now offer you the following sentiment, and take great pleasure in calling upon our ardent friend, Dr. Benton, for a speech, whose warm heart I am quite sure is already restive to give utterance to its emotions.

*The primitive fathers and mothers of Virgil:*

May their children never forget to bestow upon them the grateful homage of filial hearts, and may they in return always have cause to be proud of their progeny.

Dr. Benton then responded to the call as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I arise to respond to the call of my distinguished friend, Dr. Hyde. The sentiment he has just offered is one well worthy of him; and had it been overlooked or forgotten, our meeting to-day would have been wanting in one element of enjoyment, which, as much as any other, has made this occasion sacred to us all.

I need not say that I arise to address you feeling much embarrassed. I am almost a stranger in the arena of public speaking, and there are so many once familiar faces of my boyhood, brought as by magic before me, with all their stirring and animating recollections, that I am aware the impressions made upon me by this meeting may be different from yours.

We who are your guests to-day are keenly alive to the many changes which have passed over our ancient homes and family circles, and there are many tints of melancholy in the picture of the past not so obvious to you.

Your hospitality, too, mingled with the recollection of sweets that once clustered around the shrine of our homes, is such that language is feeble to describe these emotions, and rhetoric but childish prattle.

I could only give outward expression to these emotions by encircling you in my arms, and pressing you to my bosom with one loud, long hallelujah to Him whose kind providence has permitted this meeting.

Mr. President:—I have always had a strong desire to acquaint myself with the early history of the Town of Virgil; and the many facts presented in the able historic address to-day, have amply paid me for this visit. But the inquiry comes up, who were the primitive settlers of the Town of Virgil? What did they do; and what memento have they left behind them of their virtues and their worth? They were distinguished men—men of rare integrity—men of eminent fortitude—men emphatically robed and redeemed in the love of country! for they came here with their garments dripping with the blood of the Revolution. If we look at the physical obstacles which they had to overcome, and the very unpropitious circumstances attendant on their removal, we cannot accord them too much fortitude. Integrity was a necessary element in their character; for without it this mighty work never could have been accomplished.

Mr. President:—To bring a family into an unbroken wilderness, as this was sixty years ago; and then be often without any means of subsistence, save what was furnished by nature, until the starchy forest could be removed and the soil made to produce—required an energy, a fortitude, a power little short of omnipotence.

May I not point you to your common school as one proud monument of their wisdom and goodness? These primary institutions of learning were fostered by them with great care,—may their children make a corresponding effort to improve them. Another institution you have among you of still higher claims, coming down from these puritan fathers, “with healing on its wings.”

No theme commands so much of our admiration as the Religious devotion of these ancestors. The first *altars* here erected by our noble fathers to the eternal God, burned with sweet incense, and the voice of supplication went up to the unwearied ear of the Deity—calling down the blessings of heaven to aid, to comfort, and support them. And may not many of the blessings now enjoyed to-day be in answer to some of those fervent petitions?

Ladies and gentlemen, have I not said enough? But this occasion is one, not only for congratulation and joy, but one for our improvement. Indeed, it seems like a special providence that so many of us meet here on this *oasis*, midway between this life and the life to come! Let this hour then be one of reflection, one of noble resolve.

We are driven by the force of circumstances, by every consideration drawn from the past and present of the physical and moral world, to “go forward,” to begirt ourselves with unceasing activity, for this is a progressive age.

Contemplating the wonderful and astonishing improvement of our times, discoverable in every possible direction, *but least of all in the moral world*, (for the selfish principles of man have found much encouragement and development,) our minds naturally recur to Virgil; and we ask ourselves the question—has this place and this people kept pace with this mighty march of improvement?

In that very interesting reception Address this morning, your improvement in wealth and independence of thought has been dwelt upon, and afforded me much pleasure. The general thrift of your farmers, and the shrewdness of your speculators, I had heard of before to-day; for your fame in this had gone abroad. Still there may be a question, whether in this strife to aggrandize self and build up individualism, you have not lost sight in some measure, of those great public interests which are essential to your real prosperity and happiness, and must be looked to, in order to advance with the age.

The present appearance of your houses of public worship is not so favorable to your public spirit and your morality as I could wish it. It is to be hoped that the church planted here by our venerable fathers has not lowered the standard of her *faith* or become insensible to her obligations. Otherwise the wealth that is here accumulated will furnish but a meagre blessing to your children.

You have the means in your hands to establish such institutions among you, as shall be necessary to give your children ample education without sending them abroad.

Then let me say to you, to use this means in building up a home interest. Let this *classic* spot ever be sacred on account of the united interest and action of its inhabitants, in promoting mental and religious improvement. Let this home of my childhood, endeared to me by a thousand fond recollections, be the spot where a united people, scorning to work for self alone, shall open their hearts to the great interests of humanity!

And, Mr. President, as the old Town of Virgil stands upon a physical elevation, overlooking vast slopes of country, so may the moral excellence of her citizens gleam from afar in resplendent beauty.

Mr. William E. Gee arose and said:

I expected, by attending this Jubilee, to see my old friends and hear from them, but not to speak myself; but the request of Dr. Benton and others, to hear from me, is such that I cannot refuse to express my gratification at meeting with them on this occasion. The Town of Virgil, its valleys and its hills, its woodlands, its cultivated fields and its inhabitants, are all dear to me,—with almost every farm, and almost every farm-house, are associated recollections to which my mind reverts with pleasure, and although not my birth-place, yet removed here in early infancy, it is endeared by all my earliest remembrances and childhood sports. I am proud to own it as such and to claim the inhabitants of this vicinity as my friends, and these guests assembled here as the acquaintances and associates of my youth. It was here amidst these scenes and associated with these friends that I resided till I arrived at the meridian of life, and since my removal I have never returned without stopping involuntarily upon the summit near the north line of Harford, which over-

looks a large portion of this Town, to trace out the residences of my friends and recall the past. How prolific is thought on such an occasion!—the sports of childhood, the recreations of youth, and the more grave concerns of mature manhood, all crowd upon the mind in quick succession. As I reviewed the scene this morning and noticed the different localities that were of particular interest to me—their pleasant condition and the vast amount of human happiness which the imagination would conceive might be enjoyed in such favorable situations, there was brought to my mind as being peculiarly appropriate, the words of a former resident of this Town, who possessed a spark of poetic genius, and wrote after a short absence, for one of the famous periodicals to which Dr. Hyde has alluded:

Oh, Virgil! sacred thou to scenes gone by,  
 When childish fancy viewed a cloudless sky;  
 When naught but joy re-echoed o'er thy plain.  
 And naught but pleasure saw the youthful train,—  
 Thou art still the same.

I perceive by the ardent salutations here exhibited, that although the lapse of time has changed the ruddy brow of youth into the grave and sage-like appearance of meridian manhood, and besprinkled our locks with occasional indications of decline, yet, *we* are still the same,—the same warm hand of friendship is presented, the same generous feeling of interest in each other's condition manifested, the same *forms* seen, and the same voices heard as of yore, and I perceive by the general bouyancy of feeling here displayed, that our assembling in view of these scenes in front of the Village Green, the grand arena of our youthful recreations, has, by a kind of magical influence, made us feel like boys again.

The situation of this Town, remote from the great thoroughfares of the State, and its inhabitants in a great measure exempt from their vices, have enjoyed a favorable opportunity for the cultivation of those virtues which render life pleasant and society agreeable; and it is gratifying to know that emigrants from this Town, have, in almost every instance, exerted their influence to promote a sound and healthful morality in the communities where they reside.

Some have entered the field of politics, and have been elevated to positions of honor, realizing their fondest aspirations—some by a quiet application to professional employment, a strict observance of



domestic duties, and the dissemination of moral and religious principle, have rendered themselves beloved. Some have engaged in mercantile employment, and become useful and influential members of society; while others in the agricultural department of industry, have become respected for intelligence, enterprise and unyielding integrity. All these considerations combine to make the Town of Virgil respectable abroad. I have observed with pleasure for several years, that whenever I have heard it spoken of by people at a distance, it has been in terms of the highest respect.

We hope, therefore, that those who still reside here will exert themselves to perpetuate the good name of the place; that while laboring to cultivate and enrich the soil, that they may receive a bountiful harvest, they will not neglect the intelligent and moral cultivation of those more delicate *plants*, which the God of nature has placed in their care; and greatly dependent upon parental training for future happiness and prosperity in life.

It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to give more extended publicity to *one* fact, to which a brief allusion was made this morning, which should be published as an important item in the history of the State; and fully proves that the early settlers of this Town, though situated at a distance from the original public works, were fully competent to appreciate the advantages which they would derive from them, and entered with spirit into the public improvement policy which has since so checkered the country that the means of speedy and cheap conveyance are furnished to almost every portion of it.

After the Erie canal was finished there arose a discussion in the public mind concerning the respective merits of canals and railroads as a means of public conveyance,—one consideration in favor of the latter was, that many places were accessible by railroads where canals could not be made; this was the case of the southern tier of counties in this State.

The mind of Nathaniel Bouton, one of the early settlers of this Town, known to us all as an energetic farmer and worthy citizen, became interested in this subject,—he conceived the idea of constructing a railroad from the city of New York to Lake Erie, direct through the then secluded southern tier; and in the year 1828 he examined a route through sufficiently well to know that it was a

feasible one, and with the aid of the speaker of to-day, he prepared and published the outlines of his plan in the *Cortland Observer*, a paper then issued in Homer Village.

His plan was copied in several periodicals along the line of the proposed road; and from that time the subject of a New York and Erie railroad continued to occupy the public mind until the grand project was completed. The decease of DeWitt Clinton, whose death was announced in the same sheet that published Mr. Bouton's plan, was a cause of discouragement to him, for he had fondly hoped that his favorite project would receive the approbation and aid of that distinguished statesman; but *the nucleus was formed, the project was originated*, and the work advanced. Mr. Bouton was anxious that it should be a State work; he argued that it would be good policy for the state to engage in it,—that it would annually yield a revenue which might be advantageously expended for the support of schools.

A few months previous to the final completion of the road, its worthy projector died at his residence in this Town, where he had lived forty-five years. He had lived to see the place of his adoption transformed from a wild and howling wilderness into a delightful and well cultivated country, inhabited by a moral, intelligent and industrious people. He had lived too, to see the distance between his residence and the Atlantic changed from a dreary journey of two weeks into a pleasant ride of only a few hours, and this Town enjoying all the privileges, and possessed of all the elements which are necessary to promote the happiness of a people.

Dr. John Frank, in responding to the call of his name, gave the following toast:

*Virgil, the land of nativity to many of us now present :*

Whenever we tread or our thoughts revert to these hills and valleys, we remember that here is the revered spot where our earthly journey was commenced. Although many of our friends and neighbors have gone to the spirit land, not to return,—peace be to their ashes,—and many of us live in different parts of the country, we can never forget the land of early days and of our birth.

Hon. J. Reynolds being called upon by the President, replied that he had been for a long period a resident of Virgil, that the present occasion was one of intense interest to him, he having ob-

served and been a participator in so much of the eventful history of the Town; but was obliged to decline any extended remarks in consequence of ill health.

Wm. Woodard, Esq., spoke as follows:

It gives me much satisfaction to meet so many of my friends in this happy gathering, who with myself can boast an early home in this good "Old Virgil." Both childhood and youth were spent among these hills and valleys; having been familiar for years, with the social and civil condition of the people, he was delighted after years of absence to discover that the changes in the whole phase of things had been in obédience to the great law of progress, and that the home of his dearest and earliest associations had improved its intellectual and moral condition. The allusion to the present condition of the schools and churches of the Town made by one of the speakers who had preceded him, reminded him of a time when there were six distilleries in successful operation and not a finished church edifice in the whole Town. He said he took great pride in finding on his present visit, that his beloved Town had entirely abandoned the alcoholic manufacture; and in place of her distilleries he congratulated his kindred and other friends, that they could now enumerate eight buildings erected and dedicated to the worship of the living God. So too had the common school house become the common property of every neighborhood in Town. A subversion, said he, of the liquor manufacture, for improvements of this character, was cause for the highest gratification to him, and only endeared to him the more the home of early years.

Col. M. Frank, of Wisconsin, being called upon by the President, spoke in substance as follows:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—This social gathering is a time of especial interest to those who claim this Town as the place of their nativity. I can truthfully say that this is the place of my birth, and here were the scenes of my childhood and youth. The hills that rise in the distance were the first that ever greeted my vision; the streams that wind their way through this valley were the first I ever looked upon. Here were the beginnings of life, where were received those early impressions of thought that gave direction in after years. To many of the associates of my youth in this Town,

I owe much. There were among them those whose firm resolve was to make their mark high. The early educational advantages and facilities for intellectual improvement were comparatively limited,—hence a greater amount of effort was required to make advances. Schools for acquiring anything beyond the most ordinary branches of education, there were none; consequently the young men of Virgil twenty years ago, were forced to rely upon such resources as they could best command, to improve their minds and prepare them for the theatre of human action. I am happy to know that not a few of the young men at the period of which I speak made good use of their time; they appropriated every instrumentality within their reach to the acquirement of useful knowledge.

Since the long absence from my native Town, I find the aspect of much that I see greatly changed,—the woods have diminished, farms enlarged and improved, the agricultural prosperity of the people has been largely advanced. This is well, it is indeed gratifying. But during the period that has intervened since my residence here, I have always been less anxious to learn of your success in the enhancement of your prosperity and the accumulation of wealth, than to hear of your intellectual and moral condition—of the progress of your schools and your success in whatever pertains to the true elevation of the people and the more substantial interests of society. My anxious inquiries in this behalf have not always received satisfactory answers. I fear the intellectual, moral and religious interests of the people have not always kept pace with their pecuniary advancement.

Those who are now the young men of Virgil have a high mission before them. We live in an age of unusual intellectual activity—the time for ignorant and unlettered men to attain to an honorable distinction is soon to pass away. No young man can now reasonably expect to reach a high position of public or private trust without an education. The posts of honor and true respectability are not attainable by those who make money, or low amusement the only object of pursuit. Besides the improvement of their minds, the times demand of the young men of Virgil active service in behalf of the cause of humanity. And among the calls to duty, upon every young man and every lover of his country is the cry of suffering millions for the suppression of intemperance. This Town, this county, the State and the world have been long enough cursed with

the traffic in intoxicating drinks, and the friends of freedom and humanity should rise in their strength for its overthrow and effectual legal prohibition.

Judge Edwards arose and said, that he would not occupy the time of the meeting with many remarks, but would say that he was deeply interested with the incidents of the day, and sympathized with the feelings of the friends who addressed the meeting. The scenes of the day and the remarks made, naturally led his mind back to events long since passed. Allusion has been made to the appearance of houses for religious worship as not being what it should be. He said, that though he might not be inclined to deny the fact, he felt it would be unjust to apply any discredit arising from this cause *indiscriminately*, as from what he knew of the history of the place, he could say that numerous individuals had made large sacrifices to promote its religious interests. He would refer to one incident to illustrate this remark. Mrs. Roe, mother of S. M. Roe, President of the day, was an early and ardent friend to the interests of religion. At a certain time her friends at the East sent a small amount of dried apples. Did she call her friends and feast them and her children on those? Not at all. When her children began to congratulate themselves upon the acquisition, she told them that they might restrain their feelings, for she had a use to which she should devote them. She sold them and applied the proceeds to the purchase of a cloth for the communion table—the same that is now used in the church to which she belonged.

The President, Dea. S. M. Roe, remarked that the incidents of the day had brought to his mind many of the most important events of his life, spent mainly in this Town.

It had revived more particularly the history of his early years, while the country around was almost an unbroken wilderness, the undisputed abode of panthers, bears and wolves. He said the privilege of seeing so large a group of his old friends once more, under so favorable circumstances, had made him over-full of joy.

The associations of the day had reminded him of some of his early luxuries, such as being cradled in a sap-trough by his kind parents, amid the sweet melody of nightly serenades by wolves. He could never forget among the later delicacies of that tender period the ex-

quisite flavor of the brown johnny-cake, made of the pounded corn, as his frugal mother parcelled it out to the eager appetites of her little flock.

He further remarked that he was confident, when his friends recollected his early advantages, and how much of his life had been shaded by the native forests of by-gone days, they would not expect him to be now a long-speech-making man.

Hon. M. Frank, of Wisconsin, being called upon for a toast, gave the following sentiment:

*"The Ladies of our native Town:*

Never surpassed in beauty and virtue. The time has now arrived when they also take rank with the foremost in accomplishments, refinement and taste."

R. O. Reynolds, Esq., being called upon to respond, said:

MR. CHAIRMAN:—The time has been when no happier, and as I then thought, no more appropriate duty could be imposed upon me than a full and heart-felt response to the truthful and well applied sentiment of my friend from the West. But those days, alas, have flitted away upon the swift wing of time. It was when in the full freshness of vigor and youthful manhood, my heart was filled with the mysterious romance and gallantry of that sunlit period of my life, when everything wore a rosy tint, when the future was undarkened by the sombre clouds of real life, and the beautiful and fascinating sisterhood with which I was surrounded, possessed a weird and mystic charm that placed them almost upon a level with angels in disguise.

Now the enchantments of love and ambition are in a measure dissolved, and I stand advanced beyond the threshold of struggling, fighting life, and have begun to learn how little of fruition there is in the bright visions and promises held out to us by the deceiving mirror of romance and anticipation. The silver thread meandering and multiplying among my locks betoken the effect of years and labor, and when I seek for rest and quiet recreation to recruit my wearied energies, I find them no longer in the gay circles of the rosy and young, but by the retired domestic hearth-stone where I begin to see those surrounding my own fire-side who are already preparing to take the place I have made vacant among the youthful and the gay. Yet, aside from all the romance and unreality with

which youthful inexperience may surround the female character, there is a valuable truthfulness in the sentiment of my friend which will be felt and appreciated by all, and should be the cause of the highest exultation and congratulation amongst us.

The qualities, characteristics and endowments which combine to make up the perfect female character, and bestow upon her those charming graces and attractions which make her the lovely companion of man's prosperity and the sweet solace of his adversity, are of a two-fold character and origin. Some, and those indispensable ones that form the foundation of all human attraction and worth, are conferred by the great Master alone. Others, the mere accessories, and still no less desirable and captivating, are added by cultivation and improvement. Thus beauty of person, virtue and goodness of heart and character, and strength of intellect, can be acquired only from the great source of all beauty, goodness and mental power, whilst that beauty may be improved and rendered more attractive, that virtue and goodness may be increased and refined, and extended in its usefulness, and that intellect may be improved, enlarged and strengthened, almost to infinity, by those embellishments and accomplishments, by that refinement and taste which are acquired by the cultivation and the teachings of society.

Thus my friend has well said of the ladies of the Town of his nativity, that the time has never been when they were surpassed by their sisters in any neighboring country in virtue and beauty, in those qualities which God bestows to form the perfect woman; and although it is equally true that the time has been when our young ladies lacked many of the advantages for the improvement of the mind and the cultivation of the graces and adornments of manner possessed by some of their neighboring sisters; yet, my friend may well say, and we may all congratulate you, young ladies, "that the time has now arrived when you may also take rank with the foremost, in accomplishments, refinement and taste."

It has been no less true with the sons than with the daughters of Virgil. Possessing from the earliest settlement of the country, and inheriting from their hardy pioneer ancestors from New England and Eastern New York, in a degree unsurpassed by any that surrounds them, those energies of character, that strength of mind and will, that desire to progress, and that real goodness and soundness

of heart, all of which combine to form that foundation granted by Heaven for making up the perfect man, they needed but the opportunity and the means to add to those precious gifts bestowed by nature's kindly hand, the improvements and accomplishments, the cultivation and refinement, which education and an acquaintance with society bestows, to make them what they now are—both the sons and daughters of our native Town—"never surpassed in those gifts and virtues which God alone bestows, whilst they also now take rank with the foremost in those accomplishments and refinements derived from education, instruction and cultivation."

No one can say of us, however, in our early struggles for improvement, at the time when our means of improvement were the most meagre and limited, that we were ever discouraged, or that we failed to turn everything to the best account, and had I time, nothing could be more amusing to the book-gorged, academy-glutted student of the present day, than an account of the way we sought to become anatomists and chemists, physicians and lawyers, orators and debaters, poets and essayists, editors and journalists, and even tragedians and stage players. It would, indeed, be a picture of "the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties," and I feel almost inclined to promise when the leisure can be commanded, to give you a lecture, descriptive of our early struggles in the various departments of learning and literature.

But now I have only a glance to give at some of our most primitive attempts at improvement, for the purpose of proving that however rude the material used, or unskillful the attempt, yet they were attended with most important results in the development of the resources, and in the formation of the character of the sons and daughters of our maternal Town.

Almost in all cases the first effort towards intellectual culture in the early settlement of a country, is a combined effort to supply that greatest and foremost want of mental food arising from a scarcity of books, resulting in the formation of the circulating library. How well many of us remember the precise appearance of every volume contained in the Old Virgil Union Library, as they were arranged upon the shelves within the little white pine, unpainted clothes-press-looking book-case, being just five feet wide and six feet high, and one-half filled with books—oh! how precious! From that sacred



arcana I first drew, with trembling and delighted fingers, the first volume I ever read beyond the dignity of Mother Goose. It was "The Sorrows of Werter." Next we were more fortunate, and the Arabian Nights were cantered through day and night, by my friend, Carlo M. Woods, now clerk of Supreme Court, in Quincy, Ill., and myself, side by side, with such delight as the well fed reader of the present day can never enjoy.

Then in after years, when the few volumes remaining became dogs-eared, scattered and gone, and the fountain was no longer supplied, and its treasures exhausted, how wonderful the diligence with which we watched for and sought out any stray crumb of new food. Often have I, together with Phillip Roe, Carlo Woods and William Edwards, gone two, three and four miles on foot to borrow a book we had heard of, owned by some remote neighbor. I tell you that was comfortable reading. And then the delight furnished me by my good friend, Dr. Bronson, who was ever ready in my boyhood, to aid me onward in improvement, loaned me the gratuitous use of his share of the Cortland Village Library. Oh, the riches! the treasures. Mavor's Voyages and Travels, Clark's, Bruce's, Cook's, Lewis and Clark's, and others of voyages and travels, and then the opening of that rich treasury furnished by Cooper's and Sir Walter Scott's Novels, then in current publication.

It was with the rest of them as with me, and those early struggles and slender advantages have told upon our lives.

Next to acquiring the means of information, follows the discussion and the application of the new world of knowledge acquired. Then follows the debating society—not confined to students, merchants or lawyers, clerks or young mechanics, but bringing together the farmer and the day worker, for miles around, who had a taste for cultivating the mind together with the controversial propensities, and the depth of the questions discussed; the gravity and learning with which each side was studied and weighed, would seem to settle forever without controversy, the comparative merits of Bonaparte and Washington as generals, (*no one thought of comparing them as men,*) the respective abilities of Hannibal and Cæsar, the comparative benefits derived from Dr. Franklin and Columbus, from the art of printing and the magnetic needle; yet in those very clubs in which I have seen so familiarly many a face assembled here to-day,

and in which I have so often wielded my sword of lath, against the trenchant blades of the Franks and Hydes and Woods and Terry and the Greens and the Edwardses and the Hunters and the Roes, have been elicited for the first scintillations of intellects that have since proved themselves worthy of the highest cultivation, and have since rewarded richly the largest appliances of improvement. Many of us who are now occupying at least, comfortable and reasonable positions (and some ranking with the highest,) in the learned professions, would now but for the humble debating clubs in this good Town, have been but third rate hewers of wood and drawers of water amongst you.

Oh, pardon us, ye Goddess Thespis, that I should so long forget thy early votaries. Only think of the preparations and rehearsals for our exhibitions, *a la dramatique*, in the different districts of our common schools. Was ever Cæsar so foully murdered as by my friend Frank, over on Luce Hill? Why! the stab that even *et tu Brute* gave, was nothing to compare with it. And was ever Robin Roughhead made so much a clown as on the boards at the South Settlement? And Deacon Homespun could never have more dressed and looked the stupid, superstitious, ignorant country doubter, than was put on by our then facetious friend, Hiram Green. But Rome's grand effort, "her greatest and her last,"—Frank as Pizarro, myself as Alonzo, our little, withered, yellow, dried, monkey-faced school-master, who shall be nameless, as Rolla, and the long galaxy of talent, male and female, that faithfully rehearsed through the long winter at the old white tavern on the hill, in the hall, at the weekly rent of a quarter pound of tea or its equivalent.

If Forrest could have seen our school master as Rolla, he never would have played more. His great heart would have broke, and it was no wonder that the glorious winter for fun and rehearsals ended in a failure to give the final *eclat* by a public exhibition.

Persevering to the last, we had no *press*, no *type*; but by procuring foolscap paper to be headed with the printed words in Roman capitals, "The Spectator," we weekly issued our closely written columns to an admiring public; and imitating the great essayist Addison, in the style of our articles and in the manners we reformed, as well as in our paper's name, for three long years we continued the faithful monitors of the public through the medium of the *press*, composed

of the fists of Frank, myself, Hyde, and other worthy contributors. And who shall say how much the tastes and facilities of writing thus and then acquired may have influenced and controlled the career and destiny of my friend, who was its principal conductor. But alas, I can dwell upon such pleasant reminiscences no longer. The rapidly declining sun warns me to a close. The happiest day must have an ending. The most joyous gatherings must be followed by a separation, and we must again become scattered abroad, and mingled with strangers to our native soil in the strife of life, but let us all remember, one and all, that whenever duty may call us, wherever our lot may be cast, let each son and daughter of Virgil strive to reflect nothing but the sunshine of bright honor and worth upon their maternal brow.

On motion it was resolved that a committee of three be appointed to procure from the several speakers of the day, a copy of their addresses, the sentiments presented and the odes sung, and arrange the same with the proceedings of the day, and have the whole published in pamphlet form; and that Dr. F. Hyde, R. O. Reynolds, Esq., and N. Bouton constitute said committee. The meeting then dispersed.

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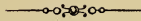
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*Members of the Choir.*

E. P. SLAFTER, Chorister,	MISS M. ROBINSON,
H. M. SHEERAR, Second C.,	“ M. HAZEN,
M. FRANK,	“ L. SNIDER,
J. B. SHEERAR,	“ M. ROE,
WM. CHATTERTON,	“ J. M. HOTCHKISS,
DR. J. BALL,	“ J. GLEASON.
MRS. A. SNIDER,	



## Introduction to *Supplementary Letters*.

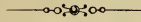


IT occurred to me that it would be well, as the original pamphlet giving the account of the Festive Gathering of Early Settlers of the Town of Virgil, was exhausted, and events have been constantly transpiring to the present time, that it would be very desirable to renew the original work, not only, but to bring the history up to the present time and embrace the same in one publication, to be placed in reach of any one who should wish to become acquainted with a plain and authentic history of the Town, for the entertainment and gratification of those who will be desirous of reading the same.

Nearly four years since, I commenced a series of "Letters" connected with this subject, for the Press, and concluded to copy them nearly entire into the New Work. It was at first thought best to abridge them, retaining the substance in less compass; but in looking it over, it seems to myself that this course would render the style much cramped and inflexible; and thus destroy that easy flow of ideas that now prevails—at least as the writer looks upon them. Errors will be corrected, parts withdrawn, and such additions made as shall appear to be proper and suitable.



# Supplementary Letters.



## NUMBER I.

AS the elections for the year are past, the crops gathered, and the greatest share of marketing produce is done, and winter is upon us in earnest, it may reasonably be assumed that the minds of the people are accessible to other considerations than those which have engrossed them during the busy months past. Taking this view of the situation, the writer, who has lived in the Town to be described more than *seventy years*, and has been familiar with most of the important events that have transpired in that time, has come to the conclusion that he will be justified in presenting some facts in reference to matters in the history of "Old Virgil." And he is the more inclined to do so from the fact that many seem to have erroneous impressions, greatly to the disparagement of our Town, in reference to the various items embraced in the standing or credit of a Town where a common, mutual, and general interest prevails. This diminutive opinion doubtless had its origin in the obscure beginning which the early settlers had, in the dense forest where they chose their homes, and where their daily business was to fell the forest and prepare the soil to yield its production for the sustenance of man and beast. In this respect the Town differed but little from those surrounding it; but there were some disadvantages peculiar to this Town, not in so great a degree participated in by others. The settlers were generally poor, and had to purchase their land of those residing at a distance, involving the necessity of taking the money that could be realized from hard toil, away from us and paying it out in distant places, from whence it never returned to aid

by its circulation, the success and prosperity of our people, rendering money extremely scarce and bringing them to great straits.

Another permanent embarrassment was the lack of a heavy stream of water passing through centrally, for propelling mills and machinery. Others might be mentioned which had a depressing effect on the energy of the pioneers; but they did not prevent them from persevering in the determination to hew out for themselves and families respectable and comfortable homes, and to rear the institutions of religion and learning. The situation was very different from that now found in settling a new country. Everything must be taken in its primitive state. The first settlers must wait twelve or more years for a Post-Office. And though our office was established in 1808, yet as late as 1873, some have found it hard to believe that such an obscure place should have a Post-Office. There is one here, however, which is doing a business very creditable to the intelligence of the population.

Before the partially cleared farms produced a sufficient amount of grain for the sustenance of the people, it was common for the able-bodied, stalwart young men to go, as it was said, "out to the lakes," to work during harvest, that they might supplement the scanty amount grown on their own narrow fields. I might mention as a specimen of difficulties to be overcome, the scanty remuneration received by ministers of the gospel. One who had labored several years in a church made a statement which is derived from an authentic source to this effect; that he had not received money enough from the church to which he ministered to pay the postage on letters which he had received on their account. Afterwards the same church secured the labors of a minister on a salary of fifty dollars. Another church passed a solemn resolution that they would *endeavor* to raise *ten* dollars to secure the labors of a minister two Sabbaths during the year. Such are some of the facts existing, incident to the settlement and progress of this Town. These have doubtless given rise to some of the disparaging things that have been said long since, and have been repeated in modern times, taxing heavily even the "Charity which suffereth long and is kind." It will be the object of the writer, in a series of articles, to show that such opinions if entertained, are unfounded, and merely indicate the ignorance or prejudice of those who express them.



## NUMBER II.

IN looking over what I had written in reference to the remuneration made to ministers of the gospel, it occurred to me that an inference might be drawn, reflecting on the generosity of members of the churches. I should be reluctant to leave such an impression, as they probably contributed according to their ability in the substantial of life, to the comfort and convenience of those officiating in the "sacred calling." It remains to set forth some of the insurmountable obstacles arising from the situation of the Town. It was one of those constituting what was known as the "Military Tract," and was about ten miles square, with a ridge of hills extending from west to east through the centre. When the settlements were made they occupied, essentially the borders of the area, so that small communities were formed in each corner, causing great inconvenience in doing business of whatever kind; religious, literary or political, incident to the progress of the people. The result was that every institution was feeble and essentially isolated; and when any important object was to be promoted, requiring the concurrence and aid of all those interested, they must hold their consultations and unite their influence at great expense and inconvenience. This state of things told unfavorably on the public mind. Then any cause was viewed in its results, compared with the whole population, as seen in the census reports; it would appear much disproportioned, and the inference would be against the intelligence, ability and public spirit of the people.

Each settlement would naturally urge its claims for privileges, such as town meetings, clerk's office, etc., which caused a constant struggle between the respective localities for participation in these and other common privileges. It would be difficult to set forth the embarrassments arising from this cause, so as to be appreciated by those who have never experienced the like. This state of things continued, with many efforts for the division of the Town, all of which failed, till 1845, when it was divided into three towns, by a line east and west, identical with the original line of lots five miles from the north boundary, leaving the north part to retain the name of Virgil, and the south part separated into two parts. The west

part having the name of Harford, and the east part that of Lapeer. This division has, on the whole, proved satisfactory, as it has placed each portion on its own responsibility, and given to each the opportunity to labor and strive as best it might, for its own advancement.

I have hitherto occupied your space to set forth the obstacles with which we had to contend; and, let it be remembered that the merit of success is in proportion to the difficulties to be overcome. The writer has enjoyed no advantages for education outside the Town under consideration; consequently your readers will not be entertained with flights of the imagination, finding their expression in gorgeous sunsets, with light, fleecy clouds tinged with gold, speeding their way towards the eastern horizon, or gurgling, sparkling rills pursuing their serpentine course through the lowly vale. The object will be to give the facts in plain language, such as none need misunderstand.

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### NUMBER III.

IT will now be expected by your readers that the writer of these articles will proceed, as was proposed, to give evidences of enterprise, thrift and advancement. That is now my object. It must, however, be premised, in order to present a proper view of the merit of success, that a portion of our population, embracing men of property and influence, have failed to harmonize with the efforts made for the promotion of plans for the elevation of the Town in the scale of morality, education, or agriculture, causing the wheels of progress to roll heavily. There has also been a class of *idlers* subsisting on the thrift and industry of their fellow-citizens, that has added very much to the burdens of a community essentially laborious and enterprising. It may be said that such is true of every place. However that may be, it is certain with us every laudable enterprise has made its way, inch by inch, through the difficul-

ties that have interposed. It has been said, that if a man should live where he could gain a subsistence by laboring *two* days in the week, he would labor but *one*. And if he could live by laboring *four* days, he would labor *six*, thus gaining a surplus. Such is very much the case in this Town. It is not claimed that it is the most fertile spot on earth, or even in the State or county. Here is, however, encouragement for a good return for the labors of the husbandman. Few of the frugal and industrious, blessed with health, have wanted for the necessaries and comforts of life; and many have enjoyed its luxuries. The time has been, in the memory of the writer, when a man owning a property of three thousand dollars would be accounted *rich*; or, as the phrase then was, "forehanded." *Now* it would require fifteen to twenty thousand to entitle him to such appellations.

The soil is better adapted to grazing than tillage; yet, before there was a demand for the products of the *dairy*, the necessities of the people required the cultivation of grain to a considerable extent, especially of *oats*, which found a ready market, though at a very low rate, in Ithaca and other villages around. Cattle and sheep were also raised in large numbers, and were sold to be driven toward the seaboard for market. At length there arose in the cities, and especially in New York, a call for *butter*, and the labors of the people were directed to the production of that article. The cultivation of oats for *export*, always very exhausting to the soil, was then abandoned.

About twenty years since, an investigation was made with much care, by the writer, and it was ascertained that the butter made and sold from the Town, in one year (1852,) at the extremely low prices of that time, brought a return of \$25,000.

Recently it has been impossible to form an estimate, approximating correctness, of the amount made and sold, but it has, doubtless, doubled—and the price at which it has been sold has also doubled, or nearly so. Within a few years considerable attention has been given to the production of cheese; and during the past season, an amount has been made and sold which brought a return of \$8,000 or more.

## NUMBER IV.

I proceed now to give some account of the productions of our Town. Allusion has been made to the cultivation of *oats*. Considerable has been done in wheat, corn, barley, etc., though it is long since *grain* was a leading production. Formerly much was done in raising potatoes for food, marketing and feeding. A single farm has been known to produce 2,000 bushels in one season. And in 1816—known as the “cold season”—the same farm produced some five or six hundred bushels from  $3\frac{3}{4}$  acres. Every description of produce has had a beginning and a slow progress. This has been emphatically the case with the products of the *dairy*. After the call for these products became considerable, it was long before the article of *butter* was reckoned in a manner graduated by its merit. Butter was butter, and the product of every man’s dairy went at about the same price. The writer once asked a butter-buyer if there was not a difference in the *quality* of butter? The answer was that there was a *great* difference. The question then was, if there is a difference in *quality*, why not a corresponding difference in price? The reply was, that the buyer could *see* the difference, but could not make it because it would give offense, and the disaffected individuals would be in his *hair*. Indeed, individuals have been known to indulge a life-long dissatisfaction towards the buyer because he declined to pay the same price for *inferior* butter that he did for that which was *fine*.

The following dialogue has, in substance, taken place in numerous instances:

Mrs. D. asks the buyer why he cannot give as much for *her* butter as for that of Mrs. A.? The answer is that there is a difference in *quality*. Mrs. D. asks in great earnestness, is not *my* butter as good as that of Mrs. A.? The buyer answers (rather crest-fallen,) well, ha—rdly. Mrs. D. then says, you need not be troubled with *my* butter any more.

It will readily be seen that this state of things would operate to discourage efforts for the production of a *fine* article.

For the last few years the article has been graduated in price, essentially by its *merit*. One important instrumentality in producing this result, has been the critical analysis to which the article has

been subjected in the market where commercial favor is unknown. Another has been the competition among buyers, where such a vast amount has been produced, which is constantly seeking sale in the village of Cortland.

I would say that a few days since I called on a buyer of that village, when I found him surrounded by a crowd of firkins and tubs, when he said that the reception of this amount had been the work of that day—amounting to about \$2,000—and he had been alone. He, moreover, said that in the sixteen, or rather fourteen days, of this month of December, his partner and he had purchased butter to the amount of about \$20,000. And there has been a *rush* upon other buyers to an equal extent, more or less.

But I was writing about *Virgil*. Well, the matters and circumstances here set forth have been common to this region, and participated in equally by the inhabitants of this Town. For a few years the production of *cheese* has occupied the attention of a portion of our population. The success attending the efforts made in this direction has been of slow growth, owing to the various difficulties and embarrassments standing in the way. These have been mostly overcome, and during the few late years great improvement has been made, and now the “Virgil Cheese Factory Association” stands strong in the confidence of the people. And the product of the past season, owing to its very fine quality, has been sold at high figures—the last sale having been made at  $14\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound. For further information your readers will please wait for the annual report of the Association.

I have hitherto written nothing of the production of *fruit*. The remarks on this branch of our subject must be confined mostly to apples and pears, as the climate is not favorable to the production of peaches. It is said, however, that *grapes* may be successfully cultivated by those who have the requisite skill in this branch of horticulture. There are several orchards of considerable extent, which have produced a sufficient amount of apples for home consumption, and often considerable to be spared for *export*. In one instance a single orchard produced, in one season—that of 1858—so many, that *two hundred* barrels were exported, besides supplying a lively home demand. Some pears have been exported; the amount, however, has been small.

## NUMBER V.

AS the writer of these articles has dwelt somewhat fully on the productions of our Town, in the line of agriculture, horticulture and the dairy, it will be appropriate to deal in this number with the enterprise of the people in promoting their social and moral well-being.

It is understood, of course, that the practice of intemperance prevailed here in common with other Towns, and the country generally. To illustrate the low state of public sentiment on this subject, I will allude to a fact which occurred under my own observation. I was present at a prayer and conference meeting, one evening, some miles from my residence, when, after a while, a professor of religion living in the vicinity, came in and participated in the exercises. Towards the close, the exercises took the form of free conversation and individual experiences. The individual alluded to stated that he did not enjoy his mind very well, having had a "falling out" with one of his brethren that afternoon. The fact was that each owned a distillery in the same neighborhood, and they could not run harmoniously in such proximity. The circumstance produced no great sensation. At present such a state of things cannot exist. Public sentiment, low as it is, would frown down such procedures. The subject of temperance took tangible shape on the 4th of July, 1829, when, after a very appropriate temperance address by Michael Frank, a young man of the vicinity, "The Virgil Temperance Society" was formed of twenty-one members, mostly young men, who subscribed to the constitution and pledge. The pledge only required the members to abstain from drinking distilled liquor. As tame as was this pledge, it caused great excitement, and objections were raised that would not now be thought of, or cherished for a moment, even by those who are life-long opponents of the cause. Two very common objections, long since obsolete, were these: First—what shall we do with all the rye and corn? That is, in the event of the success of the cause. Most of us would know, at this late day, what to do with these productions. Second—the success of this cause involves the union of Church and State. Much effort of temperance speakers was expended on these two objections. Time and the progress of things have obviated these long since.

About the time of the organization of this Society, it was remarked that there were in the Town, six distilleries, and only one skeleton of a church edifice. In a few years it was said that there were no distilleries and three church buildings. Now it may be said that we have no distilleries and eleven church buildings on the same territory.

Owing to that characteristic of the Town set forth in a previous number, the area is distributed in separate communities, consequently several of these buildings are moderate in size and pretension. They are, however, such as furnish sufficient accommodation for the neighborhoods and communities where they are located. Here the lovers of God and his cause may assemble, worship him according to the dictates of their own consciences, and "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." It may, however, be justly claimed, that several of them are respectable in size, and finished in a manner creditable to the liberality and taste of the respective societies to which they belong.

Now the people of our Town have the assurance to look upon these undeniable facts as indicative of their fidelity to strong moral principle, and their persevering energy directed to securing these desirable results.

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## NUMBER VI.

IN place of my ordinary weekly letter I give the report of the trustees of the Virgil Cheese Factory Association, for the year 1873, received, adopted and published by vote of the Association.

### REPORT.

The trustees of the Virgil Cheese Factory Association congratulate the stockholders and patrons, in view of the success attending the workings of the same, for the season of 1873, of about five months, commencing May 12th, and ending October 14th.

This success is very much owing to the eminent skill of the manufacturer, Mr. E. D. Harris, in producing an article of superior quality, and also to his vigilance and fidelity in caring for and pre-

serving the cheese while maturing, and until sold and removed. The figures and statements below will abundantly vindicate the correctness of our introductory remarks.

	LBS.
Milk brought to factory in May,.....	44,575
Milk brought to factory in June,.....	160,856
Milk brought to factory in July,.....	185,043
Milk brought to factory in August,.....	161,888
Milk brought to factory in September,.....	113,025
Milk brought to factory in October,.....	32,017
Total,.....	697,404

First sale of cheese, May and June, including that sold to patrons and others in small quantities, as was done in every sale afterwards, made 20,062 lbs. at 12½c.,.....	\$2,507 75
Second sale, July, 17,863, lbs. at 12¾c.,.....	2,277 52
Third sale, August, 16,122 lbs. at 13¼c.,.....	2,136 16
Fourth sale, Sept. and Oct., 14,908 lbs. at 14¼c.,...	2,105 75
Total,.....	\$9,027 18

Paid Harris 1c. per pound,.....	\$689 55
Due stockholders 1c. per pound,.....	689 55
	\$1,379 10

Leaving to be divided among patrons,..... \$7,648 08

The number of cheeses made during the several months are as follows:

May,.....	73
June,.....	277
July,.....	300
August,.....	252
September,.....	182
October,.....	57
Total,.....	1,141

Total number of pounds manufactured,.....	68,955
Average weight of cheese,.....	60.4
Due stockholders as above,.....	\$689 55
Expenses, findings, taxes, etc.,.....	539 55
To be divided among thirty shares \$5 each,.....	150 00



The debts heretofore resting upon the Association are all provided for, and the prospect for success hereafter is promising. In the Spring of 1872 the hope for success was slender, and only through the perseverance of comparatively few patrons, and the skill and constancy of the manufacturer, has success been achieved. And it is due to the purchasers to say that they exhibited much skill and discrimination in appreciating the merit of a fine article, thus enabling the patrons to realize an advanced price in the several sales which have been made.

NATHAN BOUTON,  
 GEORGE TYLER,  
 RUFUS E. HOLTON, } *Trustees.*

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## NUMBER VII.

HAVING dwelt in a previous number, somewhat at length, upon the rise and progress of the temperance interest in our Town, also upon the building of churches, their number and the vital interests clustering around them, it will not be considered foreign from our design to spend a number upon the burial of the dead, which is an inevitable duty of every generation of our mortal race.

When the settlement of the Town commenced, the fulfillment of the primitive sentence pronounced upon man after the fall, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return," was visited upon its inhabitants. The first to pay the debt of nature was a stranger, who, attempting to go from a point near the Cayuga Lake, on the State road, so called, to Chaplin's on the Tioughnioga river, lost his way and perished. He was found soon after and buried by the few people of the Town, in a manner as respectable and appropriate as practicable. He was buried near where he was found. Only a few families at this time (1798) resided in the Town, which extended over ten miles of territory. There was no public burying ground, and it was not possible to know where it would be located. It was ten to twelve years afterward that a public burying ground was commenced near the intersection of roads, afterwards called the "Corners," and

recently the "Village." Families buried their dead on their own premises, and others, strangers and transient persons were permitted to be laid in these family grounds. Ultimately, it came to pass that one or more of these grounds came to be considered *public*, in a subordinate sense. There was a large number of these which continued in use after the public ground was opened, as before described. It turned out that its locality was not generally satisfactory, and within a few years a place has been secured for a Cemetery, on lands formerly owned by Hon. J. Reynolds, and where *he* had buried *his* dead. A Cemetery Association or organization, was formed according to the law in such case made and provided. Additions have been made since the first purchase, and it now consists of about six acres with more suitable ground contiguous, which can be acquired when it shall be needed. And it may be said that whether villages prosper, railroads succeed, or any other temporal interest shall be advanced, this "city of the dead" will spread abroad on the right and on the left. Whether commerce, agriculture or any other occupation of men prosper or not, the current of mortality will constantly sweep, like an over-flowing stream, the children of men into the "hollow gaping tomb," and "the mourners go about the streets." Soon these mourners will fall victims to the king of terrors, and *their* remains will be laid to rest in the insatiate grave, and other mourners will lament and grieve; and so in constant succession, as saith the scripture, "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh."

The cemetery referred to is not in a romantic place, such as is frequently chosen for the final resting place for the dead, though in portions it is gently undulated, easy of access and very neat, commodious and respectable in appearance, and very creditable to the piety, intelligence and refinement of the people of the Town, and all interested as having relatives here entombed. Here are more than thirty monuments of very respectable appearance, belonging to the families of the Town, and others, varying in cost from one hundred to three hundred dollars. As has been remarked, it was a long time before the public mind became thoroughly united on this locality, during which, other and smaller grounds were, of necessity, being filled up. Recently, it has been the case, that families have been collecting the remains of friends from those scattered localities

where they had been interred, and depositing them together in a family plate, here procured for that purpose. This process is constantly going on, and this central and principal cemetery is absorbing the contents of those scattered in different parts of the Town. Here is the place where persons of a contemplative state of mind may pass through and read the inscriptions and epitaphs on monuments erected to perpetuate the memory of cherished friends, and be admonished to prepare for a like event to themselves. This may be accounted like going to the house of mourning, concerning which the scripture saith, "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart."

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## NUMBER VIII.

THE subject of Agriculture, or cultivation of the earth, has always been considered indispensable to the proper sustenance and development of our race. In agreement with this proposition, it is said in the Scripture that "the king himself is served by the field." It is also indispensable to the progress and prosperity of a community, that the several branches of industries, or trades, be prosecuted for the mutual benefit of all, and no one occupation can well prosper without the co-operation of a great share of the occupations in which the respective individuals of a successful community are employed. Hence, if one of the many different employments is successful in a community, others must be comparatively successful also. So that there is a mutual connection and dependence of the several callings or occupations pursued by its members. There are, however, particular localities where one kind of manufacture will take the lead, owing to the different circumstances and facilities which are there prevalent.

In our Town circumstances indicate clearly that the occupation of agriculture, and other employments closely connected with it, should employ the energies of the great majority of the people. It has been

a problem with the thoughtful and sagacious, how the energy, indispensable to the success of this calling, could best be developed. Much information was necessary to guide, judiciously, this energy when brought out, that the best results might be realized. The principle of the proverb, that "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend," was finally adopted, and Agricultural Societies were formed for mutual encouragement and information. In this county of Cortland an Agricultural Society was early formed, and has continued with varied success to the present time. Some individuals from this Town attended its Fairs with profit, but the distance was such that few only could be induced to attend. It occurred to a few minds that it might be practicable to hold a Fair to this Town, thus bringing the benefits of the institution home to the people here. It is said, I believe, with truth, that the two Lincolns, Theron and Wait, were the originators of this plan. When spoken of, it very soon awakened a great and prevailing interest on the subject, which resulted in the formation of the Virgil Agricultural Society early in 1854. The members were generally inexperienced in the matter, and other embarrassments tended to retard operations, but the adage, "Where there is a will there is a way" proved true, and though it was a season of drouth, a successful Fair was held, and several agricultural men from other towns came to wonder and admire. The Fair was a success. The unquenchable ardor and indomitable enthusiasm of a large portion of the people prevailed, and creditable Fairs were held till 1863, making the number of ten Annual Fairs.

After two or three years it was thought best to procure a piece of ground where they might be held in successive years with convenience and security. A very suitable locality was secured on a lease of years, to the amount of four acres, in a square form, and surrounded with a substantial fence of boards set upright, and eight to ten feet high, and a building of unassuming pretension reared in the centre for a "Floral Hall." At first it was impossible to procure sufficient funds from membership and other sources, to pay the premiums. At length it was proposed that we proceed to make a large cheese, to awaken more interest in attendance upon our exhibitions. A cheese was made and pressed in a cider mill, in a hoop supported by the tire of a wagon wheel, and afterwards turned by a

machine of ingenious contrivance, and presented at the Fair. The interest to see the cheese was great, and the premiums of that Fair were fully paid.

After the cheese became mature it was divided among those who had furnished the curd, and the aggregate wait was more than five hundred pounds. The example and success of our Fairs awakened an interest in other towns around; and other societies were formed which had the effect to draw from the interest of this, and owing to this fact, and also to that of a constant current of opposition raised by certain individuals, who kept up a constant clamor against it, charging the administration with favoritism; etc.; and it having had the desired effect of awakenening an all-controlling and widely extended spirit of vigilance and enterprise on the subject of agriculture and kindred employments, it was thought best, on general consultation, to disband and profit by what we had learned, and by what we might yet learn from other Fairs held near us.

Of those who held the office of President, the names are as follows: N. Bouton, S. G. Jones, Josephus Gee, C. A. Hotchkiss, J. G. Tyler, Martin Luce and Wait Lincoln.

The following are the names of those who held successively the offices of Secretary: S. G. Jones, C. B. Gleason, W. A. Wood, Orrin C. Dann and A. Mahan, all of whom performed the duties of their offices with ability and fidelity.

It will not be proper to close this article without a tribute to the ladies, who were constant in their aid, rendered with much skill, fidelity and zeal, through the whole existence of the Society.

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## NUMBER IX.

IT seems to your correspondent that it may be in order, at present, to give some evidences of the enterprise of our inhabitants in the direction of roads and means of transportation. The time was, in the memory of the writer, when all transportation between this Town and the Hudson river, or New York, was by wagons.

Teams were dispatched with produce for Albany, Newburg or Catskill, and returned with merchandise. Some were loaded with butter, and made their way direct to New York, and would be gone three or four weeks and return freighted with family supplies for the year. An effort was early made to get a Turnpike Company chartered from Norwich or Oxford to the head of the lake, or to Ithaca, as it has since been named. This project, however, failed, to the great gratification of the petitioners, as they afterwards saw that it was impracticable. Partial relief soon came on the completion of the Grand Canal. Much expense has been sustained in the Town in the construction of roads and bridges. The Tioughnioga passing through the east part of the Town, required an expensive bridge, which, at the early day in which it was built pressed heavily upon the people; also other bridges over rapid streams which were frequently carried away with high water, and had to be replaced with others, which were promptly built with the recent improvements embraced. Soon after the completion of the Grand Canal, the subject of Railroads began to occupy the attention of the people. Such roads were constructed in England, and short pieces were built in this country—particularly one between Schenectady and Albany, of about fifteen miles.

The Grand Canal traversed the north part of our State, and was a State work. It was felt by all impartial minds that equity required that something should be done for the southern tier of counties, or as they were sometimes termed, "the secluded counties." What it should be was not so readily seen. It was very certain that it could not be a *Canal*. The face of the country rendered it impracticable. It occurred to a citizen of this Town that a railroad might be constructed from New York to a point on Lake Erie. So much was his mind impressed with the feasibility of this plan, that he took a journey to New York and examined the route for a railroad from that place to Binghamton, and returned with the firm impression that the route so far was practicable. He had previously become acquainted with the route from Binghamton to Tioga Point, (now Elmira) and was satisfied with it.

Having a son wishing to move to Cattaraugus county, he took an ox-team and a load of goods and went along and near so much of his contemplated route as lay between his residence and Hinsdale,

of the above named county. He thus had an abundant opportunity to examine and locate a route so far. He proceeded to inquire and inform himself respecting the territory intervening between that place and Dunkirk, on Lake Erie, where he proposed that the road should terminate. He returned firmly assured of the practicability of the whole route.

The next work in order was to present this plan to the public. It was important that it be done with much *care* and propriety. Having been reared in the years just following the Revolution, when schools were poor, he could not wield the "pen of a ready writer." He invited his son, the writer of these articles, to aid him in this work. He gave the data, and by our labor for a week or two, in writing, erasing, substituting and altering, a piece was written embodying the plan in such language that we thought it would do to be printed. Every idea was closely scanned; every sentence and every word thoroughly weighed. We well understood that the whole matter would be looked upon as impracticable and visionary. This, however, had not the least effect to shake the confidence of the projector. He secured the publication of the article in the *Cortland Observer*, a paper published in Homer, in this county of Cortland. A few extras were procured. One of them was taken to Angelica, in Alleghany county, and this article was copied by the paper of that village. An effort was made to get the plan published in the *Journal of Commerce*, of New York, but failed.

Soon, however, the project became known, and the people interested became aroused to the importance of the subject. Conventions were held, and though the work was slow, having innumerable obstacles to overcome, yet it was accomplished, and the New York and Erie railroad is a living reality. This is the great Trunk Line, and the writer cannot pretend to say how many branch lines are dependent on this for their existence.

The article referred to was published in February, 1828, forty-six years since. The projector lived so long that in his life time the road was completed to Binghamton, and while in his last sickness, and within a few days of his death the cannons were booming, and rejoicings were had over the event, in the latter part of 1846, nearly nineteen years after the publication of the plan. The writer of these articles is not very nervous, but when in Binghamton, stand-

ing near the convergence of the several roads that come in there, he sees the acres of tracks and hears the whistles of the numerous trains as they come in and go out with the numerous labels indicating the extreme points connected by them, and reflects on the obscure and feeble origin of all this as no other living person can reflect, he must acknowledge his sensibilities to be deeply stirred with the scene.

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### NUMBER X.

IT has been the intention of the writer of these articles to close up each subject dwelt upon, in one number. It has been felt, however, by myself, at least, that some of the numbers have been longer than would be desirable, and it was found that the last number would be much too long if the subject were to be closed up in it, so another is devoted to it.

The enterprise of the people here was put to a very significant test when the proposition for the construction of the Syracuse & Binghamton road was made. Though it was to pass only through one corner of the Town, the call was responded to by the payment of \$11,100 to its stock, as I learned upon inquiry of the lamented David Hale. It is needless to say that this whole amount was lost by those who paid it. This sum was paid with the slender hope of advantage that could be entertained under the circumstances, while other towns had the road passing through them centrally, where the people paid nothing. Within a few years, those residing in the west part have been called on, very urgently, to aid in the construction of the Southern Central, passing through the hither part of Dryden, and considerable sums have been paid for that road. Both these roads have been carried through, but neither of them has a station nearer our village than six miles, so that the advantages of such roads are not brought very near to us. There is, however, one consideration left for us that is rather gratifying, which is, that our Town is not bonded for railroads nor any other great object. Our Town issued bonds for the payment of bounties in the time of the late civil war,



which were felt to be an embarrassment while they remained, and an evident feeling of relief prevailed when the last of these were redeemed; and they were brought together at a meeting of the Auditing Board, and one of the Justices asked aloud, if any one had any objection to offer why they should not be destroyed? No one raised any objection, and they were all placed in the stove, and every one seemed to breathe easier.

Much has been done here in the construction and support of common roads and bridges. More, probably, than in most other towns around, in proportion to space and population. The alteration of the State Road, so called, so as to take most of the travel from Snider Hill, so called, through Gridley Hollow, has caused a great expense, especially to the people in the vicinity, and also to the Town at large; yet as this road is so located as to avoid most of the hills which abound in this portion of the Town, it has been adhered to, and the considerable expense involved in sustaining bridges, etc., has been borne with as much quietude and resignation as could be reasonably expected. We now assume that the credit of our people, for enterprise on the subject of the different classes of roads and bridges, should rank as high as that of any other town in this vicinity, or anywhere else.

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## NUMBER XI.

IT would seem that the subject of education should be considered of importance enough to claim, at least, one letter in this series. And that may, perhaps, come in as well at this time as any other.

It was much to the credit of the people here, that they considered the subject of education to their children, of such importance, that they associated together, in the separate neighborhoods, and erected their rude school-houses. It will be understood that the School Law had not then been enacted, and there was no organization of school districts; but a few neighbors would voluntarily associate to concert means for the advancement of this *vital* object. As early as 1798 a school house was erected in the west part of the Town, near

the present residence of Aaron Hutchings. This building was occupied for a few terms, when a collection of young people was had, and they occupied it for their exercises, and it was burned down in consequence. One of the number is still living at an advanced age. His name is Seth Stevens. When the writer commenced his school days, a few years afterwards, a log house, forsaken by its occupants, was used for this purpose, and a man hired for a year, gave direction to the young idea, which was ready to shoot. This teacher was employed by a written contract, which the writer has seen within, comparatively, a few years, pasted on a window to help supply the place of a pane of glass. The names of the parties were legibly written upon the same.

It must be acknowledged that here is incontrovertible evidence of the energy and determination of those early settlers, who, without State aid, incurred this considerable expense for the promotion of this very important and laudable object. Schools were sustained in all the principal neighborhoods, with more or less efficiency, until 1813, when the School Law took effect, and school districts were organized, school houses built, and order established. Numerous districts were formed, so that in about 1840 there were in Town, districts and parts of districts, amounting in number to forty or more. Soon after this the Town was divided; and now we have in its present limits about twenty districts. The advanced branches of common school education were brought in by slow degrees, and it was a long time before English Grammar was tolerated as a legitimate branch of common school education.

Academies were few and of very recent organization in the country generally, and various causes operated to prevent attendance on them by our more advanced scholars. To obviate these difficulties, in part, a High School, or as known in common parlance, "The Virgil Literary Institute," was organized and sustained for twelve or more years, with a good degree of success. At length academies and other literary institutions around, have furnished such facilities that this has been given up.

Numerous teachers have been raised up, of very respectable acquisitions, and have gone to different parts of our country to engage in the instruction of children and youth in the fundamental branches; and also in the more advanced studies pursued in Academies and

Normal Schools. It might be considered invidious to name some of those who have distinguished themselves in this department, and not to name others, but as it is impracticable to mention all, we must be permitted to allude to some without intending disparagement to any. It has been said that the merit of success is in proportion to the difficulties overcome. If the difficulties in the way of our students were greater than those in many places, the effort necessary to overcome them when sustained, might lead to still more strenuous exertion, and greater acquisitions would be made. Students from here, must, of course, meet obstacles and expenses unknown by those who live in the villages or cities where literary institutions are located. The expenses incident upon attendance at those institutions have pressed very heavily upon parents in our Town, and evinced much zeal and generosity in parents, as they have given from the fruits of their toil for the sustenance and aid of their sons and daughters while they were making solid acquisitions in the sciences there taught.

Allusion will be made to a few facts in illustration of the general truths set forth above. Some time in the course of the years of 1850-'54, a number of our scholars were in attendance upon the Cortland Academy, then under superintendency of Prof. Woolworth. At a certain time he was attending the recitation of a class, most of whom had their residence with their parents in Homer village, while the remainder were mostly from Virgil. The Homer scholars answered the questions but poorly, and they would pass along until a Virgil scholar was reached, when they would be answered. This continued a while when the feelings of the preceptor were aroused, and he gave vent to them in manner and form following, to wit:—"I am ashamed of you. Here you have lived all your lives in this village, having convenient access to the school at all times, and here are scholars coming from the Virgil hills, bringing their board, hiring a room, and answering your questions."

It might be accounted indelicate in the writer to name the scholars referred to, as coming from Virgil and answering those questions. I am told that some from our Town have distinguished themselves also, in the academy in Cortland village, previous to the institution of the Normal School. Among these were Anna Sheerar, Orrin Luce and Mary Lecch. In the Normal School, some from this

Town have graduated; John E. Winslow, James H. Shults, W. S. Spencer, etc., some of whom have been employed in the same institution as teachers.

In the Autumn of 1868 there was what was called the Regents' Examination in the two Academies of Cortland and Whitney's Point. Questions were sent to be proposed to the students in the classes. A large class was examined in the Cortland Academy, under Prof. J. J. Pease. Only one of the whole number passed in all branches, and that was Miss Sarah B. Leech, now Mrs. Louks, from one of the "Virgil hills." The same examination was had at Whitney's Point, under Prof. E. C. Beach. About thirty in the class and none of them received the certificate involved, except Lydia Bloomer, now Mrs. Davis, who like Mrs. Louks, was born and reared in Old Virgil. It seems that there must have been decided merit in their acquisitions, respectively, or these scholars and their native Town would not have had this distinguishing tribute, while all other towns and localities represented in these institutions failed to endure this test.

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## NUMBER XII.

ONE would conclude on perusal of my last extended letter, that the subject of education in Virgil, had been sufficiently set forth, but upon reflection and further consultation with friends, it is thought best to continue the subject in another article, with the desire to do impartial justice to those interested, which, it must be conceded, is a delicate and responsible task.

It seems that a slight error obtained in the last number in reference to John E. Winslow, who was named as one who had graduated at the Normal School. It appears that he was prevented from graduating by ill health, and was forced to return home, where he has since remained, owing to sickness in the family, and has not yet resumed his studies. It is due to him to say that he has the reputation of a thorough scholar, so far as his health and other circum-

stances permitted him to proceed. Others beside those named have graduated and have become distinguished teachers, among whom are George E. Ryan and Alice Lincoln. Some years since Marvin Ryan, son of Jonathan Ryan, became a teacher of distinction, and went to Illinois and engaged in teaching in an institution of some note, where he continued for a time, when he was taken with disease and returned home. To the great grief of his friends and acquaintances, his disease terminated in death. The aforementioned George E. Ryan is a younger brother of the deceased just referred to, and is now engaged as Principal in the same institution, called a Union or Graded School, at a salary of \$800, with two hundred and fifty scholars enrolled. Miss Lincoln has been engaged as teacher in institutions of distinction in Dryden and Binghamton.

During the early years of our Town's history, several teachers have risen among us, who have acquitted themselves nobly in their profession. Among these are William Hunter, Michael Frank, P. F. Grow, Frederick Hyde, W. E. Gee, George Graham, I. B. Bloomer, J. S. Squires, John M. Roe, Rachel and Milly Bouton, Ruth and Minerva Lincoln, Charlotte and Jane Palmer, Charlotte Ehle, and others too numerous to mention. A large number have engaged in this honorable and responsible calling in more recent years, among whom, owing to his want of acquaintance, the writer feels that he is incompetent to discriminate, though many of them are doubtless fully equal in merit and success to those in the list named.

We have lived and progressed under the different forms of administration that have obtained during the sixty years since the enactment of the School Law. We have had School Commissioners, School Inspectors, Town Superintendents, County Superintendents and District Commissioners. All these officers have had resting on them, in the times of their administration, respectively the responsible duty of examining candidates offering themselves for teachers. And even before the enactment of the School Law, a sense of the importance of some sort of *test* appeared necessary to the sagacious, early settlers, and they endeavored to discharge this duty according to the best of their ability. Every one acquainted with the spelling book published about the year 1800, by Noah Webster, Jr., Esq., knows that at the close of a long chapter of hard names there were

two short columns of long names of five, six or more syllables, such as Ompompanoosuc, Canajoharie, Michillimacinac, etc. In the exercise of their prerogative and their best judgment, they chose, in one instance at least, the lesson containing the aforementioned names, and directed the candidate to pronounce them, which she did to the satisfaction of those who conducted the examination. This occurred in about 1807. It will not probably be considered impertinent to give her name. It was Mercy Wright, and the writer participated in the benefits derived from her intelligent and faithful labors. If I were asked at what time in the history of our Town, the interest in the cause of common school education was greatest, my answer would be, that it was, in my opinion, in the time when the "Virgil Literary Institute" was held, and during the administration of Hon. H. S. Randall, County Superintendent, which were co-temporary.

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### NUMBER XIII.

IT is probable that by this time your readers are expecting something brilliant in the setting forth of the names of distinguished individuals of our Town, in the several departments and aspects in which human life is viewed by contemplative observers. Your readers may rest assured that we have a bright array of names to be presented, and commendable and honorable deeds done, before we close these essays. In order that these shall shine in a manner to give a just and appropriate view, the picture must have painted for it a proper background. As these are to be brilliant, it would seem that the background should be *dark*, that the contrast may be the more significant.

As early as the earliest recollection of the oldest inhabitant, the practice of intemperance in the use of intoxicating drinks has prevailed in Town, and has produced its lamentable effects. It would be difficult to add much to the vivid descriptions of the untold evils of this practice, as they have been set forth by the tongue and pen of eloquence which have been employed on this painful subject during the long years that have passed since 1829, when the minds of

the people were thoroughly aroused on this subject. Temperance societies were formed to counteract and remove this great evil. Much good has been done, relief has been gained, individuals have been reformed and evil prevented. But the warfare was an unequal one. The friends of the cause of temperance had unanswerable arguments founded on moral principle to present, which were available for a good purpose, when set before the moral, intelligent and reflective portion of the community. These, however, were not adapted to effect the mind of the seller of the deleterious article, or to make head against the craving, insatiable thirst of his victim. Numerous plans have been put in requisition to save, if possible, those who have been drawn into the net of the remorseless tyrant, Intemperance. When approached by a kind friend in his sober hours it seemed as though reformation were probable, and high hopes would be cherished by ardent, hoping, solicitous friends. Such hopes have proved, in a majority of instances, to be delusive, and the cherished object of affection and anxiety has returned to his cups, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. It is painful to trace the history of the rum-sellers of our town. They and their families have mostly come to ruin.

We have not time nor inclination to particularize. It would be impossible to set forth, within the compass of an essay of tolerable length, any comprehensive or adequate view of the evils and sufferings involved. How many families made wretched, hopes blasted, lives sacrificed, and poverty, shame and ignorance entailed on innocent and helpless sufferers. These and numberless other ills go to make up the aggregate of the burdens borne by the industrious, economical, thrifty and reliable portion of the community. The reader may be induced to inquire: Is *that so*? Has *Virgil* been subject to such evils and burdens in consequence of intemperance? How would the description given apply to our country *generally*, or to other countries, or to the *world*? I apprehend that the description given fails almost entirely of presenting a true view of the subject. It lacks immeasurably in force, vividness of description and pungency of expression to come up to the truth. Indeed, language fails, words fall infinitely short of expressing the woful reality. Efforts have been put forth, taking various forms, and organized on different plans. We have had temperance organizations differently

constituted which continued, each for a time, and were productive of good—we know not how much—as we cannot know how debased we might have been, but for these instrumentalities. We have now no temperance organization, and shall not have any that will inspire much confidence while spirits are employed in medicine for the sick, as freely as at present. These remarks may be thought rather *suggestive*; but the writer has been cognizant of several very painful instances of this kind. In one case a man in middle-life, under the direction of a physician, imbibed so much that he was disguised and unfit for the transaction of financial business. Many similar cases might be adduced, but I forbear. There remains another branch of this subject to be discussed, which must wait for a subsequent article.

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#### NUMBER XIV.

**A**T the close of our last number, it was announced that another branch of the same subject remained to be discussed.

The subject dwelt upon in the last number was intemperance, and its most efficient auxiliary is the use of *tobacco*. The most of those who are intemperate use this article, though many who use it are not intemperate in the use of intoxicating drinks. This practice is extremely prevalent, and is the cause of inexpressible regret and sorrow to every intelligent well-wisher to humankind. Perhaps there is no point in morals where the public mind and sentiment are so deplorably at fault as here. Let this subject be set forth in a sermon, lecture or public discussion, and any observing person will discover an ill-concealed sneer, as though the speaker were belittling himself. If in an appropriate time and place, a speaker should introduce this topic, and any should be led to intimate that the subject was beneath the dignity of the speaker, the place or the occasion, then it is beneath any of us to inquire for the cause of the increased debility of the present generation, with those that are past. Our health is given us as a rich blessing to be watched over, cared for and preserved with the utmost vigilance. The effect of tobacco is invariable in its debilitating influence on those who use it, and on



posterity. This proposition is amply supported by reference to medical authorities, as I am told. But were it not thus, an individual with only a moderate share of discrimination might see the connection of weakness and disease in children, with this practice in their parents, thus furnishing a clear illustration of one of the means by which the "iniquity of the fathers is visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation."

It is melancholy to reflect upon the numerous deaths of individuals caused by this practice. The writer has known several persons whose death could not by the greatest ingenuity of evasion, be traced to any other cause than the use of this article. Many who practice smoking or chewing tobacco, seem totally insensible to the claims of courtesy or decency. If this were not true, how shall we account for the fact that a Justice of the Peace will start a pipe while sitting in the Judicial chair, and engaged in the trial of a cause? How shall we judge the state of mind of a person who will go into a post office and engage in smoking a pipe or cigar? All classes are expected to call and get the intelligence directed to them; but all are not partial to the fumes of the pipe. Nay, it is an offense to many. How shall we justify those men of business who will indulge in this practice while negotiating with those to whom it is an offence? The writer has had important business to transact with such, when they would undertake to use the English language with a cigar or pipe in their mouth, reminding one of a carpenter trying to talk with a gimlet in his mouth. This practice by many is reckoned *rather* filthy.

We have no Town Hall to accommodate the citizens for meeting to attend to the various kinds of business incident to the progress of a community; consequently it has been difficult to procure a proper and convenient place to hold such gatherings. It has been held that they are not suitable to the design of a church, and especially as a promiscuous assembly might not use the proper care to keep the same *clean*, from the cause previously hinted at.

This practice shortens the life of those who follow it, in most instances, besides rendering that life burdensome by the weakness and infirmity thus induced. It discourages effort in behalf of youth, who might otherwise be hopeful; and the benevolent are deterred from rendering that help that would otherwise be freely bestowed in

the aid of the exertions of those who would progress in the arts or sciences. Let a young man appeal for aid to a philanthropist of means, and when about to receive that encouragement which he greatly desired—if that kind friend should discover this habit in him, the desired aid would be withheld and the hope of the petitioner would vanish in thin air. It is painful to reflect that a large share of our young men contract this habit, thus throwing a pall over their prospects, and forfeiting the confidence of every one whose good opinion could be of any avail for their success and advancement in life. How much talent and capacity are thus thrown away! It is the practice of perverted human nature to turn blessings into curses. Thus the invention of matches was one which was adapted to promote great convenience in the business of life. But, alas! how has this been perverted, as it has facilitated the smoker in his efforts to undermine health and draw on the decrepitude and debility of premature age. This is a practice of incredible *cost*. Every man that has indulged in it for forty-five years has spent \$2,000, more or less, and oftener more than less. Such disable themselves measurably, from aiding worthy objects, as building churches, bridges, school houses, and even making and keeping their own families comfortable and respectable. At a moderate estimate there has been spent in this way *six* times as much in this Town as has been the cost of all the churches, school houses, ministers' salaries and teachers' wages. If all that is worse than wasted by this practice could be expended for the increased comfort and convenience of families, and for valuable public objects, this Town might be placed in a very enviable condition.

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#### NUMBER XV.

I come now to consider some of the effects of tobacco on the powers of the minds and bodies of those who indulge in its use. And I do this by quotations from a prize essay by Elisha Harris, M. D., physician to the New York City Dispensary. He says "the ultimate results of tobacco using are invariably the same. By it the

nerves are irritated, the senses benumbed and their functions perverted; the action of the heart is rendered feeble and irregular, the blood circulates imperfectly, all the functions of life become sluggish, and old age creeps over countenances and frames that otherwise would have possessed all the bloom and vivacity of youth. Most of those causes of intermission of the heart's action which cause so much alarm to those who suffer from it; and much of that fashionable disease known as *palpitation of the heart*, arise from tobacco using." Again he says, "The disastrous effects of tobacco upon the functions of the nervous system and the action of the heart, are felt throughout every tissue of the body; the blood moves sluggishly, and as it stagnates in delicate organs, foundation is laid for every form of disease, while at the same time the poison of the drug itself is diffused through every tissue of the living frame, benumbing and paralyzing all the powers of life." Again, "Tobacco using is a prolific cause of that fashionable disease, dyspepsia; and among students and literary men, it is the most frequent cause of this execrated and protean malady. The excellent and eminent Dr. Woodward, so long the Superintendent of the Asylum for the insane at Worcester, Mass., has left his testimony, "that tobacco produces insanity." He says, "I am fully confident that its influence upon the brain and nervous system is hardly less than that of alcohol, and if excessively used is equally injurious."

It has been noticed by every one who has endeavored to produce an impression on moral subjects upon the mind of a tobacco-user, that it has proved to be peculiarly insusceptible to any motives or arguments that might be adduced. Dr. Alcott has remarked that "no class of men think more tardily than tobacco users."

Many buildings have been destroyed by fire from pipes and cigars. Some twenty-five years since a barn was destroyed on Snider Hill, by the pipe of the owner. Perhaps twenty years ago a barn belonging to Esq. Brusie, in the east part of the Town was burnt down in consequence of a drunken man going in to stay, and endeavoring to smoke, lost his life besides destroying considerable property. The reader can attribute this to spirits or tobacco. It is not material. Within the region of my personal knowledge, at least three valuable dwelling-houses have been destroyed by this cause within a few years. Fires from smoking are of frequent occurrence.

The great fire in North and Pearl streets, Boston, was caused by a cigar. A church in Chicago, which cost some thirty thousand dollars was laid in ashes in the same way.

Instances are known to the writer of those who have broken off this habit and never resumed it, and it has always resulted in an improvement of health. Dr. Rufus Holton, some sixty or more years old, effectually cured himself, indicating to all who should come after him that it can be done. Jonas Owen abandoned its use, and the use of intoxicating drinks at the same time, and continues to give them a wide berth. These cases show that this practice can be abandoned with safety.

I have said tobacco-using was an auxiliary to intemperance. I will refer to a few authorities. Says that noble friend of temperance, E. C. Delavan, "I have had my fears for the safety of the temperance cause through the insidious influence of tobacco. It is my conviction that while the use of tobacco continues, intemperance will continue to curse the world." Dr. Woodward has remarked that "the use of tobacco is the most ready and common stepping-stone to that use of spirituous liquors which leads to intemperance." Dr. Rush has observed that "smoking and chewing dispose to the use of the stronger stimulus of ardent spirits." Having a good opportunity once to get the opinion of a celebrated physician, Dr. F. Hyde, I asked him for the merits of tobacco as a medicine. His answer was in these words, "It is not necessary in the treatment of any disease." The pecuniary cost of spirits and tobacco consumed in the United States, of which Virgil is a part, is immense annually—sufficient, it may be presumed, to pay our National debt in one year, or at all events, in an incredibly short space of time.

There are in our Village three, octogenarians, or those whose ages will average about eighty, in a distance of sixty rods, who do not use the article referred to, who are able to manage the affairs of a household, and are taking part in active life. Their names are Henry Vunk, Jonas Owen and Daniel Price. There are others of the same class in Town, as B. B. Hubbell, Barnabas Baker and John Tyler, whose ages will average more than eighty, all in reasonable health for men of their years. Doubtless there are others whom we do not know well enough to venture their names. Are there as many who answer to this description, who indulge in this practice?

I am aware that two or three of my last letters may not have been very captivating; but I thought that if I evaded these points, I could not claim to be an impartial historian; hence their insertion in our course.

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## NUMBER XVI.

I now proceed to name individuals who have either distinguished themselves in Town, or have done honor to the place of their nativity in other localities. The first name which I shall mention, is that of George Frank, a son of John M. Frank, a soldier of the Revolution, and the second settler of the Town. With great difficulty and delay, he arrived in November, 1795, and settled on lot No. 43, which he drew as bounty land, in consequence of his services in the army. The subject of this notice was five or six years of age on the arrival of the family at their new home in the wilderness. All will agree that his circumstances for acquiring an education were far from flattering. He had no aid in his study of the English language from his parents, as they were unacquainted with it, being of German origin, and there being no school in the vicinity till 1798, some of his best school days must have passed without opportunity. Notwithstanding all this, he was found on arriving at mature years, to have a respectable common school education, which fitted him to fill some important offices in Town. He was Justice of the Peace for several years. He was a good writer and a very acceptable reader. While the Congregational church was without a minister, he was chosen to read sermons at their meetings on the Sabbath, for some ten or more years, which duty he performed to the satisfaction of all concerned. Having been associated with him as a school officer for a year or two, I once asked him how he had been able to make such attainments in education. His answer was that he availed himself of such means as the place afforded, and sometimes he visited the place of his birth near the Mohawk, where he gained all that he could.

Here is an example for those of meager opportunities to imitate. He was an exemplary citizen and died in a good old age, revered and lamented.

William Hunter, whose birth occurred in 1801, was brought into Town by his parents, an infant, and had his rearing here with the slender advantages of the times, and grew up a lover of education, and was qualified to teach on arriving at the proper age. He chose the profession of medicine and pursued the proper studies, reciting to Dr. Bronson, of this place. While occupied in his studies he taught our village school five winters in succession. His practice was in Jasper, Steuben Co., where he acquired the reputation of a skillful physician. He was twice elected to the State Legislature. He has gone to "that bourne whence no traveler returns." His two brothers, Charles and Hiram, became somewhat distinguished. Charles went to Jasper, studied medicine with William, became a physician, practiced in that vicinity a while, and died. Hiram engaged in the study of the law, with an attorney who spoke highly of the capacity of his mind, and of his acquisitions. He was a teacher of considerable ability; but his health failing he abandoned the law, and afterwards the business of teaching; and after a lingering illness he died. All the means for mental improvement that *could* be made available were put in requisition. Winter after winter witnessed the formation of a lyceum or debating society, where the great questions of public interest were investigated, and all the research that could be had was exercised, and the results brought out for the instruction and mutual benefit of all. These meetings inspired much interest. The comparative merits of Bonaparte and Washington, as Generals, was set forth; the respective abilities of Hannibal and Cæsar; the comparative benefits derived from Dr. Franklin and Columbus; from the art of printing and the magnetic needle; the comparative damage sustained by our race from fire and water—by slavery and intemperance, etc. Much talent and research were displayed in these discussions. They not only elicited information, but inured those participating in them for effective labor in those important causes soon to come before the people, such as temperance, etc. These debates were from A. D., 1822 to 1826. Those enlisting in them were the Hunters, Woods, Grows, Franks, Greens, Roes, Hydes, Edwards, Reynolds and others not recollected or too numerous to mention.

The first Temperance Society was formed on the Fourth of July, 1829, composed mostly of young men. It was soon followed by an efficient Female Temperance Society, which embraced a noble band of intelligent, decided and ardent friends of the temperance cause. These societies mutually aided and supported each other. The advocates of strong drink were numerous and determined. But the talent and argument were on the part of the advocates of the temperance cause. After the first address, by Michael Frank, the speakers were mostly from other places for a while, but it was soon seen that need for addresses was so great and urgent that domestic talent must be put in requisition, and the needed men were found. The effect was a general one. In many instances loads of friends would be taken to distant school-houses, and one of the number would give an address, and however few from the vicinity would come in, we were sure of an enthusiastic meeting, for we had the material with us. In this way the cause was advocated and promoted in all the school districts around, and we all had frequent opportunities to listen to our young men in support of this noble cause.

The following are some of them: Rev. W. J. Bradford, Michael Frank, Frederick Hyde, William E. Gee, P. F. Grow, and subsequently George Graham. Many who were not classed as public speakers were very useful in supporting the speakers, and in individual influence among the people, and many opponents soon became firm friends.

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#### ANOTHER VOICE FROM VIRGIL.

**H**OW glad I am that there is such a town as Virgil. How gratifying it must be to you to know you live in a county with such a remarkable town in it. I live in Virgil; but when I think of the wonderful events that have occurred here, I have to hold my breath. Why, we have men here that know all about "World-Making"—that calls everybody fools but just us. And

they can do lots of things that no other one ever thought of doing. And are full of knowledge that no one would ever need. We have some of the most brilliant scholars and railroad projectors, and, in fact, everything that is necessary to make a town great and glorious. Just take in account the number of rats killed in one barn, and then count the barns in town and suppose they don't average any better than that barn; you can see at a glance that it has some notoriety in regard to the production of rats. Mr. Editor, I must close, as I have to make out other copies of this article to the other editors of this county.

P. S.—As I have a little more time my mind is so full I can't stop here. Suppose each rat is worth ten cents; from that income alone—say nothing about butter and cheese—in a very short time we could project and build a railroad from Messengerville west, passing through Gridley Hollow and the village I live in, Froghuddle, Hutchingville, and so on to Dryden, intersecting there with the Southern Central.

Mr. Editor, it may seem strange to you that Dryden would ever be let out into the world this way, but it looks reasonable to the smartest of us. I hardly know how to stop without mentioning some other things that are occurring in our town, but I must close, and I will. Letter No. 1. N. B.—Please print soon and oblige the third voice from Virgil.

March 14th, 1874.

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## NUMBER XVII.

IT was my design to pass rather briefly over what remained of my plan respecting our Town of Virgil; but I find in your issue of the 17th of March, a fresh illustration of a fact set forth in my third letter and alluded to in my eighth, as one reason why our agricultural fairs were given up. In the third letter it is said that “a portion of our population, embracing men of property and influence, have failed to harmonize with the efforts made for the promotion of plans for the elevation of the Town in the scale of mor-



ality, education or agriculture, causing the wheels of progress to roll *heavily*." And in the eighth number, it is said, speaking of some of the reasons for giving up our agricultural fairs, "that of a constant current of opposition raised by certain individuals who kept up a continual clamor against it, charging the administration with favoritism, etc." The communication above alluded to is entitled "Another Voice from Virgil," written in a manner to caricature our Town and what has been written to the credit of the same. What has been written in this piece harmonizes in and with the facts alluded to above, and shows that the energy and thrift of the people have always had a strong undercurrent of opposition to meet when any important enterprise or improvement was proposed.

It is in accordance with all nature that every good has its opposite. Wheat has its smut. Corn has to contend with the cut-worm and wire-worm. The apple tree has its *borer* and caterpillar; the plum its *curculio*; the currant its bug, and so on endlessly, and when any efforts are put forth for the diffusion of needed information, it has its opposite; hence, "Another Voice from Virgil."

The name of the writer of these articles has been subscribed to each, that the public may know where to look for the responsibility; and much care has been taken to gain assurance of all the facts inserted, and to see that no representation should be overdrawn. The writer is held in law and equity to answer for all the statements here made. There can be but one of two reasons for withholding the writer's name from such a production as the one before alluded to. The first is that he is ashamed of it. The other is that if his name be given it will diminish from its effect.

I now proceed to name some other individuals deserving special notice: Carlo M. Woods, son of Dr. Hervey Woods, who died when he was very young, leaving him a slender child to struggle with poverty and the various difficulties incident to his condition. He was a studious and successful scholar, learned the trade of printing, went to Illinois, set up a paper published in Quincy, which continued several years. He has since been Clerk of Adams county, and afterwards Clerk of the Supreme and District Courts of Quincy District.

John B. Benton spent most of his early life here; was a student of medicine under Dr. Bronson, and has practiced his profession in Spencer, Tioga Co., with a good degree of eminence. George Graham also spent his early life here, evincing great taste for education, soon became a teacher, ultimately removed to Kansas, where he has filled several Legislative offices, and also that of State Treasurer. H. M. Sheerar had his rearing and education here, became a teacher, afterwards Town Superintendent of Common Schools, ultimately removed to Wellsville, Alleghany county, N. Y., and is there practicing dentistry with success, and enjoys a large share of public confidence, which is evinced by his being frequently chosen to fill important positions of honor and trust. Garret House spent most of his childhood and youth, and made his acquisitions in education in this Town. He afterwards engaged in the manufacture of church organs, taking up the trade without an instructor, as he said to me in words like the following, "I dug it out myself." He now has a large establishment for the manufacture of church organs in Buffalo, and makes sales of the article from Massachusetts to St. Louis.

Wesley Hooker, Esq., editor of the "*Standard and Journal*," published in Cortland village, resided with his brother, Culver Hooker, in Virgil, from the age of thirteen to twenty-one, and attended school about three months each winter, where the most of his acquisition in education was made. He, however, attended the Ithaca Academy a portion of two terms; engaged two years as teacher, when he commenced laboring in the *Ithaca Journal* office. Afterwards he was engaged in other printing offices as foreman, publisher or editor. He then returned to Ithaca, engaged in the *Journal* office as foreman ten years, then editor and business manager ten years, six years of which time he was County Treasurer, when he came to Cortland nearly two years since, procured the union of the two papers, the *Standard* and *Journal*, and has published the united paper successfully since, procuring large accessions to the number of subscribers, materially enlarging the same, and now issuing a paper equalled by few in talent, mechanical execution and influence.

## NUMBER XVIII.

I proceed with the list of names of those meriting notice in this connection.

Gideon Messenger was a step-son of Joseph Chaplin, the first settler in Town. I have heard him say that he had been through on the State Road, so called, from Chaplin's on the Tioughnioga, to its termination, on the Cayuga Lake in Milton, since Genoa and now Lansing, when there was not a house on the road in the whole distance. He was elected to the office of Supervisor of the Town several successive years, when the numerical strength of the party against him was greatest. Of course he had the confidence of his constituents. He died a few years since at an advanced age.

Moses Rice was an early settler, and a man of reading and intelligence. He was appointed Justice of the Peace and elected Supervisor in several successive years, and mostly while this Town was a part of the county of Onondaga. He died long since in a good old age. It is due to his memory to say that in the discharge of his duties as Justice of the Peace he was prompt, intelligent and impartial.

We have with us, Sanford Bouton, long an acting Justice of the Peace, performing the duties incident to that office with readiness and impartiality, and was also Supervisor of the Town several years.

Hiram Bouton, born in this Town in 1799, long since a resident in the adjoining town of Dryden, was a Justice of the Peace there several years, and until recently, when age and infirmity admonished him to retire.

Nathaniel Bouton, Jr., was born and reared in this Town. He early went to Marathon—was long since elected to the office of Justice, which he has now held for fifteen years, more or less, and has recently been elected President of the Corporation in the village of Marathon. A few only of our distinguished townsmen can be named in our list. The intention is to be impartial, and it is earnestly hoped that none will think the writer invidious. A few separate individuals will now be named in addition to those already noticed.

The writer was once in conversation with Dr. Holbrook, pastor of the Congregational Church in Homer, when the subject turned

upon this Town, and he remarked that in his previous pastorates, the best deacon he ever had was from Virgil. With me the question was, what should be his name? His answer was, that it was William C. Chamberlain. I had known him as a well disposed boy, with frank, open countenance, but this announcement met me with gratified surprise. He is a brother of N. Chamberlain, of Cortland.

We found in the *Standard* last winter, a eulogistic notice of Dr. J. Sheerar, of Vermont, and formerly from Cortland county, with the remark that it was greatly to the credit of Cortland county to have sent such a young man out to make his mark in the world. In a later issue of the same paper is a laudatory notice copied from the *Albany Argus*, of the same individual, stating for substance that a solo tenor of celebrity, from New England, Dr. J. Sheerar, by name, would make his *debut*—would sing, etc. And in a subsequent issue of the *Argus*, it is said, “Dr. J. Sheerar made a decided sensation with his fine tenor voice and refined and artistic manner.” So New England has the credit of this performance and Cortland county had it previously. Suppose we trace back this distinguished personage a little, and we shall find his birth occurring and his childhood and early youth spent on the banks of Cunningham creek, in Virgil, a small unpretending stream in general, but sometimes rather noisy.

It has been announced that one of our townsmen had been a Member of Congress. Several have been members of our State Legislature. The time was when Cortland county was entitled to two Members of Assembly. This was the case in 1825. The two parties made nomination of two Members each. The parties were represented on their tickets each by a Member from Preble and Virgil. The parties were very nearly balanced. The result was that those elected were both from Virgil. Their names were James Chatterton and Josiah Hart. Since that time six Members have been elected from Virgil. Their names were Nathan Heaton, Timothy Green, Platt F. Grow, J. H. Knapp, Nathan Bouton and Dan C. Squires. Rufus Edwards of this Town was appointed a Judge of the County Court, and officiated till the office was abolished. In less than a year since it was said that three of the most important offices in our county were held by men born and reared in Virgil, as it is since its division, to wit: Judge, Sheriff and District Attorney. When the First

National Bank was organized in Cortland, and its nine officers elected, it was seen that four of that number were born and reared in the Township of Virgil.

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## NUMBER XIX.

IN referring to the history of our Town brought out in connection with the "Festive Gathering of the Early Settlers and Present Inhabitants of the Town of Virgil," I find references to individuals which I feel justified in reproducing for the present occasion. Wait Ball settled in the Town in 1798 with a large family, and being a man of respectable education and good ability, he soon became known in Town and abroad, as one in a good degree distinguished. He was soon appointed Justice of the Peace, the duties of which office he was eminently qualified to fulfill, and continued to hold the same sixteen years. He was also one of the Judges of the county several years. He died at an advanced age in about the year 1837.

Joseph Reynolds settled in Town in 1808, and from small beginnings arose to the office of Justice of the Peace, which he held several years; was Member of Assembly in 1819, was County Judge, Member of Congress and Brigadier General of Militia. He died some years since at his residence, in Cortland.

Joseph Chaplin, son of the first settler of the Town, was distinguished in the locality where he resided as a man of intelligence and integrity, was chosen a Justice of the Peace by the people, and a Major in the Militia, and was generally and familiarly known as "Major Chaplin." He removed to the West some years since and died.

It was stated in a former number that there was no heavy stream of water passing centrally through the Town, which might be applied in propelling mills and machinery. It must not be inferred from this, however, that there have been no manufacturing establishments set up among us. There was a beginning made in the

business of stone-cutting and preparing grave stones, many years since, by Caleb Whiting, Jr., which increased very much with the years that passed, and many hands were employed and sales made far and wide, and though commencing with common quarry stone, it soon became an extensive manufactory of marble. This business has passed through several hands, and for a few of the last years the superintendency has devolved upon Charles Williams, and many exquisitely wrought grave stones and monuments have been carried from his shop to Dryden, and to other places, and many have been set up in our own neat cemetery. Mr. Williams has recently moved to Dryden, where he is employed in the same calling.

We have two extensive establishments for the manufacture of wagons and carriages and sleighs, employing each a considerable number of hands, and making sales over a wide extent of territory. The names of the proprietors are respectively, E. Perkins and E. Crain, each having a large building for the storing and exhibition of wares. We have three churches in the Village, with sittings sufficient for the accommodation of all the population residing within a convenient distance, and a minister for each. Also three stores of sufficient capacity to supply the ordinary needs of the whole population, and shops corresponding with the wants of the people. It is not the intention of the writer to represent all or any of the distinguished individuals of our Town, or those who have removed from here, as being faultless, as saith the scripture, ("for there is no man that sinneth not.")

Large numbers of our citizens have arisen from small beginnings to the possession of ample estates, some of whom have left their native place, braved the rigors and hardships of a new country, and in their age, may congratulate themselves with the possession of abundant means to meet every temporal want, reflecting that the acquisition has been made by honest industry and good economy, without any lucky hits, verifying the saying that "the hand of the diligent maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it." I might mention names, but the difficulty would be to know where to leave off safely, so I will not beging the count. I am well assured that we have poor pay-masters among us, but I feel justified in saying here, that I have been told by a merchant of great experience and inti-

mate acquaintance with the subject, that he finds a smaller percentage of loss in debts against men from this Town than any other town with which he deals in his extensive business of farmer's supplies.

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## NUMBER XX.

I proceed to cite a few facts which I might be excused from inserting, inasmuch as they have reference to parts of the original Town, but now embraced in the towns of Harford and Lapeer. In a former number reference is made to the name of Nathan Heaton, as having been a Member of Assembly from our Town, which was in 1841, and before the division. He was taken sick in his term of service and returned home and died before the term closed. He had been active in public matters, and was especially instrumental in establishing the cemetery in the present town of Harford. I proceed to mention two other names, especially with a view of bringing forward the efficacy and value of moral principle in promoting the welfare of those exercising it. At the commencement of the temperance interest, Francis Morton was an inebriate, and with his family in poverty and wretchedness. He became a sober man, embraced religion and reared a family of respectability and usefulness, and himself exhibiting the appearance of great humility and deep devotion.

Theodore E. Hart was first postmaster in that portion while it was yet Virgil, and being an extravagant user of tobacco came totally to abstain, which is more to his credit than to be a banker in Canandaigua. I derive these facts from Mrs. Heaton, now of Cortland village, a part of which is corroborated by my own knowledge.

Jesse Storrs, long an inhabitant of our Town, in that portion now embraced in Lapeer, was a teacher of some eminence, had a small property, engaged in rearing fruit trees on a very small scale, increased considerably, ultimately sold out and removed to Painesville, Ohio, continued the business, entered into a partnership, the title of which is "Storrs, Harrison & Co." They occupy much space in

the cultivation of their trees, new, rare and beautiful plants, shrubbery, etc., and have issued a spring catalogue of plants, including roses, green-house and bedding plants, etc., a description of which fills a pamphlet of sixty pages. I state these facts not to forestall some writer who may be induced to write up these towns, but to set forth the power of moral principle and persistent energy, when employed in enterprises eminently laudable and useful.

Andrew Brusie was intelligent and useful,—was a Justice of the Peace several years—had a forge for manufacturing iron from fragments, which he prosecuted several years; and when any one wished to speak highly of the quality of iron, he would say, “It is a good *Brusie iron.*” He left the Town some years since. It is not known that he is still living.

Randall Williams was an early inhabitant of this Town—received rather of a limited education here. At the age of about eighteen he went to Pike county, Pennsylvania; engaged in canaling; rose to be section engineer on seven miles of canal, implying confidence and ability. Afterwards went to Janesville, Wis., and has risen to affluence.

Reuben Gridley was a man of indomitable energy, and it was very much through his instrumentality that the road through Gridley Hollow, so called after him, was established and made fit for travel, and is the principal thoroughfare from Virgil to Marathon. He removed with a large family to Michigan some years since, where several of his sons have become men of property and influence.

John E. Roe settled here early in 1798. He was deficient in education, and in order to supplement the same, attended the common school with his children, where he made acquisitions sufficient to fit him for the transaction of any business arising in ordinary life, and acquitted himself well in the office of deacon in the church of which he was a member. John E. Roe and Charlotte Roe were the parents of five children, who lived to mature life. The eldest, Betsey N. Roe, was reputed to be the first female child born in the Town. She grew up an intelligent, exemplary woman, early made profession of religion, adorning the same by a life devoted to its interests. She removed to a western state some years ago, and has since died. She was a woman whom any man might be happy to call *sister*.



Cotemporary with her was Sally, daughter of Jonathan and Lucinda Edwards. She was also intelligent and made early profession of religion, which she adorned with a pious and exemplary demeanor, and died in early womanhood, deeply lamented.

S. M. Roe, John M. Roe, Erastus G. Roe and Philip T. Roe, were the other children of John E. Roe, before named. Their history was common in that they had only the advantages of the common school. All made profession of religion and became officers in the respective churches where they became located, several of which were weak and required much of their labor to sustain them. The eldest S. M. Roe was deacon in the Congregational Church in Virgil, his native place. Afterwards he removed to Cortland, where he engaged in the butter trade, involving also the purchase of wool, pelts, eggs, etc., till his health failed, when this business was given up. He has been elder in the Presbyterian Church there seventeen years. John M. was a leading and efficient member and officer in the Presbyterian Church in Marathon. He died nearly two years since, much lamented. Erastus G. Roe made profession of religion here—remained a few years, then left for Fulton county, Ill., about thirty years since. He has acquitted himself well as a Justice of the Peace several years—was entrusted with much responsibility connected with the war in caring for soldiers, securing their rights, etc., and active in matters of religion.

Nelson C. Roe, son of S. M. Roe, before named, spent his childhood and youth here. He afterwards removed to the West, and settled in Lyons, Iowa. At the commencement of the war his patriotism moved him to raise a company of soldiers, of which he was made captain, went into service, was with his company in sixteen sanguinary battles, and though he had an epaulette and sword-belt shot off, he escaped unhurt.

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## NUNBER XXI.

I proceed to give some account of a few more names that deserve a notice in this direction. Hananiah Wilcox and Benjamin Harding, though natives of Cortlandville, yet as they received their

education here, we feel justified in the allusion. Mr. Wilcox engaged in school-teaching in this Town and in Dryden, for a few terms—was an ardent friend and supporter of the temperance and anti-slavery causes. He lived in Dryden during the last thirty or more years, and was untiring in his devotion to these causes, as some would say, almost to a fault. He was a Justice of the Peace during several of the last years of his life, and died a few months since. Mr. Harding went to Kansas in a very early period of its settlement. He was a member of the Senate in the territorial Legislature which was dispersed by an armed force by order of the Government.

Leonard Fostser left Town early in life, and settled in Cortlandville. He enjoyed the public confidence and was a reputable member and officer in the Presbyterian Church in that place. He removed to a place in the western part of the State a few years since. It was stated in a former number that a Post-Office was established here in 1808. The business done in it was small for a long time. The population was sparse and postage high. The writer was present on a time when the mail arrived, and when inquiry was made of the postmaster, James Chatterton, Esq., by some one interested, he answered that nothing came except one letter. The route then was from Ithaca to Cortland, and frequently performed on foot. It would seem to the present inhabitants to be quite a walk to go through every day. I once met the man engaged in this service and asked him if he preferred to go on foot. His answer was that if he had a horse he would ride in preference to going on foot. Cheap postage, an increase of population, business and intelligence have added much to the business of this department, and now we have an office centrally located in a space of country of about six miles in diameter, with 275 boxes and a mail every day—for a few months past carried by a team of horses owned and driven by Mr. Julian C. Seamans, by whom also many passengers are carried with comfort and convenience. There are also two other Post-Offices in Town doing considerable business.

## NUMBER XXII.

THE names of a few other men occur to me that deserve to be noticed, whose history is connected with the war.

Clinton D. Bouton entered early into the service of his country. He remained in the army till near its close, serving the Union cause acceptably and with fidelity. On his return home he settled in Dryden; soon engaged in business, has been successful, and is one of the leading merchants in that village, and is the postmaster.

Daniel P. Griswold enlisted early, served faithfully, was in *seven* sanguinary battles, among which were South Mountain, Antietam and Gettysburg, where he received a severe wound in the leg, remained a long time in the hospital, and was finally discharged. The wound was incurable and amputation above the knee was resorted to. He lives in Town an example of industry and thrift. A brother of his entered the army and fell a sacrifice to his country's cause. His name was Barzilia Griswold.

We will now notice a few civilians. Isaac B. Bloomer received only the education furnished by this Town. He engaged early in teaching, and was afterward elected Town Superintendent of Common Schools, which office he filled several years, discharging its duties acceptably.

Walter L. Chaplin derived his education from the means enjoyed here. He taught a while, then entered upon the labors and duties of land surveyor, and now enjoys a good reputation in that department.

The writer would be happy to set forth somewhat in detail a large number of the pioneers of the Town who have lived and died here. It must suffice, however, that a few of their names are mentioned. These, with many others, encountered the rigors and hardships of a settlement in the new country. Joseph Chaplin, John M. Frank, John Gee, James Knapp, James Clark, John Shevalier, Robert Ryan, John Snider, Enos Bouton, Joseph Bailey, Simeon Luce, Oliver Ball, Abner Bruce, Ezra Bruce, William Lincoln, Eli Johnson, John Hill, Oliver Tyler, Silas Lincoln, Joshua Farnam, Jonathan Edwards, John Calvert, Moses Olmstead, Isaac Bloomer, David Snider, William Snider, William Powers, and many others,

who, having served their generation, have passed away in advanced age, respected and lamented.

In my next I hope to be able to set forth some of the Virgil men living in Cortland.

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### NUMBER XXIII.

**A** GREEABLY to the intimation in my last number, I proceed to give some sketches of individuals living in Cortland who emigrated from Virgil. As I pass into town I find for the first man D. D. Crawford, long a resident of our Town, but recently removed to Cortland. His means for the acquisition of education were limited. He commenced the business of active life with small advantages, and, indeed, I think I have heard him say that he was scarcely even with the world, but with the aid of his efficient helpmeet, attended with the divine blessing, he has accumulated a handsome property and sustains a good reputation. And I may as well premise that all those of whom I am now to write, commenced with small means, and some were emphatically poor; and it is especially true of all that they had to pass through Valley Forge on their way to wealth and distinction. I use this phrase as happily descriptive of the embarrassments and difficulties in the way of each, as he has progressed from his small beginnings to his present position of influence and respectability. If any are uninformed respecting the origin and meaning of this term or phrase, let them search it out and ascertain for themselves its signification, when they will appreciate its force in this connection.

Martin Luce was elected a Justice of the Peace, and held the office during one term; he was also chosen County Superintendent of the Poor, which office he held several years, discharging its duties acceptably.

The two Messrs. Holton are distinguished as mechanics of a high order in their trade as carpenters and house-builders. Amasa and Harrison Givens are successful merchants, having made great advances on the small means with which they commenced, occupying a splendid store and are doing an extensive business.

H. J. Messenger had only the opportunities afforded by the common school. He and the others of whom I shall write derived all their education from such facilities as this Town afforded, except in cases that will be noted as we pass along. Mr. Messenger was elected Justice of the Peace, serving the people ably and acceptably. He was also chosen Supervisor, in 1853. He commenced the mercantile business in East Virgil, in 1839, in company with William Gray, whom he bought out in 1840. He continued in that department of business there, at Killawog, and at Canandaigua, till 1857, when he went into banking with T. E. Hart, also formerly of Virgil. In 1860 he returned to Cortland and established the Messenger Bank, and he continued the same, doing a large amount of business in the time, till his regretted failure a few years since. He was principally instrumental in erecting several large brick blocks, thus giving an impetus to the department of building in the village. He is now employed as Real Estate Agent, and in other responsible departments of public business, implying a large share of public confidence.

Alexander Mahan is much younger than any other of those mentioned. His early prospects were not flattering. He engaged as an aid in butter buying. He afterward entered upon the same business, also embracing other articles of trade, such as wool, etc., on his own account. Within a few years he has been employed as book-seller, and has taken into partnership his brother-in-law, David F. Wallace. Recently, like Abraham and Lot, they have separated, and he has erected a splendid store near the Episcopal Church, which he is occupying as a music store.

E. N. Johnson began as a clerk in a small store in East Virgil. He afterwards entered upon business on his own account, in Homer. He is now in Cortland doing a good business in merchandise, and is reputed to be successful.

Luce & Silverman are photographers and artists, holding a high position in that line. The first named is a native of our Town, and passed through a great affliction in one of his limbs. It was feared that he would not recover; but it is extremely gratifying to know that he has essentially recovered, and has attained an enviable position in the employment in which he is engaged. He is yet young and has the good wishes and hopes of all his friends for a long and useful life.

## NUMBER XXIV.

I continue in this number, the list of individuals deserving notice, who came from Virgil, now living, or who have lived in Cortland. Nathan Smith was long a resident in our Town. He lived in the eastern part, and in early manhood attached himself to a company of artillery then in active service, being in Town, and was promoted to the office of Captain, and was very active in that position. He was afterwards elected Justice of the Peace, and later was chosen Supervisor, in which office his services were acceptable. He was an influential leader in the religious interests in that portion of the Town.

James S. Squires enjoyed but limited means for education in the locality in which he was reared. He was moved with a strong desire for greater opportunities, and as the best within his reach, he resorted to the means presented by the "Virgil Literary Institute," located at the Corners, since called the Village, hiring his board by cutting wood at twenty-two cents per cord, and doing it within the term of school. He engaged in teaching in a back district where his services were so acceptable that the term was extended. He taught in Town, and in Pennsylvania several terms. He at length entered upon the mercantile business, and endorsing for parties that failed, his means were exhausted, and he was advised to make the best terms practicable with his creditors, settle up, and commence again in some distant locality. He, however, declined this counsel, on the principle that the place to find a thing is where it is lost, and remained, determined to pay the full amount of the demands against him, if industry and economy would do it, which was accomplished in a short time. This is an example eminently worthy of imitation. He commenced again in the same department on a very small scale, and was successful. He was elected Town Superintendent of Common Schools, discharging the duties of the office with fidelity and success. He afterwards pursued the mercantile business in Cortland, till within a few years, when he retired from that department and became President of the Bank of Cortland, which position he occupied nearly five years. He has acquired a large property, of which he has devoted a liberal portion to the erection of the Baptist Church in Cortland, and to the thorough repairs put upon the Baptist

Church in Virgil during the past year. He was very efficient and influential in securing the location of the Normal School in Cortland.

Norman Chamberlain began life with small means, and these were soon put in jeopardy by endorsing for others who failed, by which he was severely straitened for several years. He was also long afflicted with sickness in his family. Possessing the courtesy and affability so well adapted to fit him for the position of clerk in a mercantile establishment, he was employed in such capacity by the Messrs. Freer, in Cortland, in their extensive store for farmers' supplies, etc. He has risen from that position to be a principal member of a firm that owns an extensive store doing a very successful business. He has been once elected Supervisor of Cortlandville, where the party to which he belongs is greatly in the minority, though it may be said that a local question was involved which added to his party strength. He has been liberal in rendering aid in the same particulars with Mr. Squires.

E. P. Slafter commenced business life like the others named, with slender means. His first employment in active life was as a blacksmith,—he afterwards entered upon the mercantile department, and being successful, his business enlarged and somewhat changed. Being a ready accountant, he was soon entrusted with extensive accounts to collect and settle, and was a few years since the Cashier of the National Bank in Cortland, which position he held several years, discharging its duties with skill and fidelity. He has been active in Sabbath school matters; has been President of the County Sabbath School Association, and for the past year Chairman of the Executive Committee of the State Sabbath School Association. He has also been generous in the bestowment of means for the erection and repairing of the two churches before named. He is now in the store with Chamberlain and others.

A. P. Smith, Judge and Surrogate of Cortland county, was a native of Virgil. He had the educational facilities afforded by our Town, and commenced to teach with the same. He afterwards attended the Normal School in Albany, and graduated there. He taught school again, a few terms, and entered upon the study of the law, and was admitted to practice. He was soon elected District Attorney, and later has been chosen County Judge, which office he

now holds. He is reputed to be a sound lawyer, and his decisions are seldom or never reversed. He has written and published a history of the 76th Regiment of New York Volunteers, which required much labor and research, and is accounted authentic and reliable.

Irving W. Palmer commenced the practice of law a few years since, and is well reputed in the same.

Arnold Stafford was successful in the acquisition of property, and enjoyed a good share of public confidence, which was evinced by his being chosen on the building committee of the M. E. Church in Cortland, and acting a prominent part in that committee. He died very suddenly, about two years since.

C. P. Snider set up merchandise in Virgil, and was a courteous, acceptable trader while he remained with us. Since he has lived in Cortland he has been employed as merchant or clerk, and is a good business man.

E. F. Willet was an intelligent and estimable citizen. He acquired a good property, the main part of which he left with his son, and removed to Cortland. He was once chosen Supervisor of Virgil, and was also captain in the militia. He died a few months since, much respected and lamented.

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## NUMBER XXV.

AS stated in my last number, I had given what I intended in reference to individuals of our Town, and was proceeding to draw some practical reflections derived from the facts set forth in the previous numbers. I have, however, come into possession of a fact in the notice taken of Jesse Storrs which I would have employed then if I could have assured myself of its correctness, as I would be very averse to making statements unsupported by good authority. I greatly desired then to state the number of acres under cultivation by Storrs, Harrison & Co., in rearing trees, shrubs, plants, vines, evergreens, etc. This leads me to look back a little to the origin of all, and see "how great a matter a little fire kind-



leth." It was stated in our first notice that J. Storrs was a teacher of some eminence. It was his practice for several winters to teach in districts located from one and one-half to two and one-half miles from his residence—board himself and do his own work—partly from necessity and partly from the love of the employment and his desire to advance the cause of education. As stated before he had a partiality to fruit-growing, and engaged in the cultivation of apple trees on a small scale, procuring his scions where he could in the region around, and having some whose worth had not been properly tested, bearing names which would now provoke a smile, and indicating the crude state of the profession or occupation of fruit culture. The writer having an orchard to replenish, dealt rather freely with him in the purchase of trees. His great care was to be able to assure the buyer that the trees sold would be true to the names given. He brought forward and gave currency to some new varieties, among which is the Munson Sweet, previously known by various different names. Also the Hutchings apple, which S. D. Storrs took to New England and gave it circulation through the northern and eastern New England States. Jesse Storrs took it to Painesville, Ohio, and gave it circulation in the northern and western United States. The parent tree is still living within four miles of the residence of the writer. From the small beginning described the interest has grown till we find him in Painesville, Ohio, the senior partner in a firm that cultivates in the rearing of fruit trees, vines, shrubs, flowering plants, evergreens, etc., the wide extent of four hundred acres of land—a vast contrast from teaching school two miles from home and boarding himself, at perhaps, fifteen dollars per month, or traveling and keeping accounts in the interests of a marble shop ten miles from his family and home. If there is on earth a more extensive nursery, the writer has failed to learn its location. How many apple and pear trees would grow on four hundred acres, with rows three feet apart, and eight inches in the row? How many hands would be required to cultivate such an area, keep it from weeds, prune, shape and balance the trees as they are progressing toward the time when they will be fit to transplant? What a work to fill orders for the purchase of the products of such a nursery, to be sent over the wide area supplied by the same! Without wishing to invade the prerogative of some other writer, as the sub-

ject is open, I venture to name another man, who, with Mr. Storrs, lived in Virgil till its division, in 1846, and employed in active mature life in the same.

D. C. Squires, an elder brother of J. S. Squires, of Cortland, claims Virgil as his birth-place. Here he acquired an education with the limited opportunities enjoyed, which has enabled him to discharge the many responsible duties with which he has been charged, with signal ability and acceptance. It is said that in his early youth his insatiate desire for learning led him to spend many a night lying on the hearth-stone in the kitchen, studying by the light of pine knots or candles, and then prosecuting the arduous labors of the farm on the next day. The appreciative public have called on him to act in numerous offices and public trusts, among which are the following: He has held the office of Justice of the Peace twenty-eight years; the office of Supervisor of the Town fourteen years; was Chairman of the Board of Supervisors six years; was Superintendent of Schools several years, and School Commissioner one term; was Justice of Sessions three years; was a Member of Assembly in 1865, and also in 1872. And in addition to these several positions of honor and trust, has had constantly on hand, in progress of settlement for the last ten years, the estates of several deceased persons, implying a large share of public confidence in his ability and integrity. He was also largely instrumental in procuring the division of the Town, and in giving the name to the present town of Lapeer, in which he lives. He was also a successful teacher of common schools for several terms.

It would be a pleasure to proceed with the names of other individuals in Harford and Lapeer, such as the Taintors, Hemingways, Grays, Hunts, etc., but for the reason before stated I shall forbear to do so.

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#### NUMBER XXVI.

I proceed to extend the list of those who live, or have lived in our Town, to whom credit is due.

Alexander McVean has lived in Town, and in the adjoining town of Freetown, about sixty years. He is a man of good education and

information, for the means enjoyed; has been a Justice of the Peace about thirty years; is now in that office, and elected for another term; has been postmaster in East Virgil for many years, and has held other important offices; is still vigorous at an advanced age.

William Bell has been a Colonel in the Militia and a Justice of the Peace two or more terms, and has held and acted in other important offices.

Kinne Grow was a man of respectable talent and ability. He was a Colonel in the Malitia and a Justice of the Peace. He was cut off by death about forty years since.

P. F. Grow, brother of Kinne Grow, was a man of more than ordinary attainments and ability; engaged somewhat in school-teaching; was a Justice of the Peace in the town of Richford, I think; returned, and was a partner in a store; exerted much influence in the Town; served as member of the Legislature one term, and acquitted himself there to the satisfaction of his constituents. He, also, died several years since.

John Green was long a resident here. His opportunity for education, like nearly all our men, was found only in the common school. He commenced life with limited pecuniary means, but advanced steadily till he became the owner of a large farm on Luce Hill, so called, now Lapeer, and has since exchanged and lived in several places; still careful not to get out of hearing of Virgil, and now resides in Cortland. When he made the purchase of the farm on Luce Hill, it was a problem with lookers-on whether he would be able to meet the responsibilities. When the subject was up at a certain time, Josiah Blodgett, of the vicinity, remarked, "that he did not know; John was a squirmy fellow." By this expression the writer understood him to mean that he was a man of eminent forecast and sagacity. It is needless to say that he passed through the ordeal and owned the farm. He was Supervisor of the Town a year or more, where he acquitted himself with ability and to the acceptance of the people. He has since engaged much in the purchase and sale of cattle, a very useful employment, inasmuch as it relieves the farmers of their surplus stock, and promotes life and interest in trade of all kinds, and greatly facilitates the circulation of money, thus inspiring hope and thrift throughout the community. He has

bought and put upon the road to market, 1,750 head of cattle in one season; has had the reputation of a fair dealer, and a man of integrity. The writer was associated with him in the settlement of one estate, being executors of Dr. Green, his father, which was done harmoniously and to the satisfaction of those interested.

Edmund Homer was the eldest of six children of a poor family, whose father was essentially insane. He was thus at a very early age, providentially charged with the care of a large family, with but very scanty means. With the aid of his kind and intelligent mother, with her labor, advice and encouragement, and with the help of the younger children as they grew up, he was able to save the family from severe suffering, and ultimately to place the whole in comfortable circumstances. The times were hard, and the war of 1812-'15 was upon the country, yet, about that time they went into the unbroken forest, three or four miles from the main settlement, on a high hill, a mile east from the "Girdle Road," so called, and erected a log cabin. They had a chance to clear land, fence it and seed it down to good grass, and as a remuneration to have as many acres of forest. The question of subsistence while this process was going on, would seem to be in order. The trees were felled, made in heaps and burnt. The ashes were manufactured into salts, which brought ready money. This solved the question of provisions, at least in part. But there was industry and economy throughout. He took up the trade of the carpenter, which brought in some means, and soon the family were placed above want, and a large farm embracing the spot where the first rude shelter was built, was acquired, and he passed away some years since, much respected and lamented, leaving a handsome property to his successors. His aged mother has since come down to the grave, "like a shock of corn fully ripe."

Dr. H. Bronson. The ancestors of Dr. Bronson came from Scotland, in the early part of the eighteenth century, and settled in Connecticut. Samuel Bronson is recorded as having a son, Elisha, born in 1718, the first probably born in this country. The same simple names seem to be repeated over and over in the family record, without the introduction of a second name, until we come to that of Horace Bronson, who was born in Catskill, N. Y., September 8th, 1796. Here his father and grandfather were merchants. From here they

removed to Vernon, Oneida county, N. Y., when Horace was but four or five years old, and were known as thrifty farmers. It is said that he evinced a fondness for reading natural history, and was ready in common school studies, which was properly encouraged by his parents, who were competent to give him the best of parental discipline. He received his collegiate course in Hamilton College, his father having been an early donor to that institution. We cannot be certain with whom he pursued most of his private medical studies. It was common for him to speak of Dr. Noyes as his teacher in chemistry, and often did he refer to Dr. Hastings in connection with his medical studies. After he entered the medical college the time between the lecture terms was much of it passed with Prof. Hadley, leaving him less time to spend with a private practitioner as preceptor. He attended four full courses of medical lectures, receiving his degree of Doctor of Medicine from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District known as Fairfield Medical College, in 1819, and some time in the next two years, while on a visit to his former friend and acquaintance, Dr. Lewis Riggs, then living in Homer, he was advised by him to locate in the Town of Virgil, which he did soon after, and commenced the practice of his profession, where he remained until the close of his life, January 30th, 1874. He was received into the Medical Society of Cortland county in 1821. During the latter years of his life he did not attend its meetings so frequently as formerly, but always retained his interest in its prosperity, and never failed to urge upon the new and younger members the importance of identifying themselves with its history. He came into Town as above hinted, in 1820, and has remained here since, with the exception of a year or two, which he spent in Vernon, his native place. He was assiduous in his attentions to calls in his profession, and never failed to attend on account of indigence in those who made their calls on him for medical aid. He was very forbearing to those whom he had aided, and lost much in the delinquency of his patients. He was generally accounted skillful and was very tenacious of what was termed the "regular practice." He was a good citizen and hospitable to his acquaintances and generous to the needy. He was a friend to the cause of education, and very fond, especially of the science of Geology, and collected a large amount of specimens of minerals. He

was a strong friend of the temperance and kindred reformatory causes. He has sustained a good reputation as a man of integrity and honesty. He experienced the premonitory indications of his last sickness several years previous to the time when it came. It came in the spring and summer seasons of 1873, which terminated his valuable life on January 30th, 1874.

John Tyler came into Town in 1806. He has lived here and in the adjoining town of Dryden since. He has always had the reputation of unquestioned integrity. He has been a main pillar in the Free Will Baptist Church, of which he has been long a prominent member; and now, at the advanced age of eighty-two is a principal supporter of the interests of the Church, in Sabbath-school and prayer meeting devotions. He is remarkably healthy in appearance, doubtless owing in a good measure to his fidelity to temperance principles. It is hoped that his life may be prolonged yet for years to come.

Hart Edwards, son of Rufus and Harriet O. Edwards, was born about 1846. He grew up a candid, thoughtful child, attentive to the instruction of his parents and teachers, an assiduous scholar in the Sabbath-school, and around whom the hopes and affections of parents and friends clustered. In early youth, however, he began to decline in health, and no relief being found, he soon passed away. Near the time of his departure, having some funds at his disposal, he proposed to bestow fifty dollars to replenish the Sabbath-school library in his native Town of Virgil. When about coming to this conclusion, he looked up to his mother, and asked, in childish simplicity—"Ma, do you think they will remember me if I do this?" We answer, *Yes*, we will remember you, dear Hart.

John Frank was born in the autumn of 1797, consequently is now more than eighty years of age. He was the first child born in Town, who lived to grow up. He was eminently familiar with the hardships of the early settlement of the new country. His opportunity for gaining an education was like that of other youth of the time, but being very studious he gained enough to make his acquisitions respectable. Some fifty or more years since he commenced the study of medicine, being his own instructor. He commenced practicing in his own way, which, we believe, is called Eclectic. He soon removed to Owego, where he has resided and practiced since.

He has always enjoyed excellent health, and now, at his advanced age presents a remarkably fresh and vigorous appearance. He has always sustained a reputation for unsullied integrity. He made profession of religion in 1820, and attached himself to the Congregational Church in this place, and still holds connection with that of the same name in Owego.

David R. Barton was born in this Town, and rose from a rather obscure origin to be somewhat eminent in his occupation. After rising to manhood he went to the county of Rockland, N. Y., and failing to find employment that suited him, he returned and settled in Rochester. There he came to be an efficient aid in the cause of education, and engaged in building up and establishing an extensive and celebrated edge-tool factory. He died a few years since, leaving a very salutary influence to follow him.

William Woodward, with poor advantages, became a school teacher, and also a Justice of the Peace, in which office he was true to the temperance cause; was a good clerk and accountant, and died a few years since, in Elmira.

In a previous number it was stated that the Presbyterian Church in Town had received about three hundred members. Estimating that all the other churches had received twice that number, the whole amount would be nine hundred gathered together. They would constitute a rather large company. If to these are added those whose brief biographies have been given, and admitting that though not all these are experimental Christians, yet all in a measure controlled by the public sentiment created by the churches, the question may well arise: Have the churches lived, labored, struggled and prospered in vain? Is it not worth while still to labor and strive for their success?

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#### NUMBER XXVII.

**A**FTER an interim of about three years, I resume the "Letters from Virgil." It was thought that about enough of biography had been written, but on further reflection I have concluded to give something additional. The first person of whom I will

speak was a daughter of the writer. It might be thought that delicacy would forbid; but the excuse of relationship does not satisfy those who desire to have it done, so I waive that consideration, and will give a few items in the history of Louisa Bouton, who died on the 11th of March 1846, aged twenty-one years. She manifested very early an ardent desire for education, and having a very susceptible mind, her advancement was very rapid. Her opportunities for acquisition were rather limited, though they were the best that the family could afford, and she had the great privilege, as she esteemed it, of attending the academy at Homer during one term. Aside from this, her opportunities were only such as were afforded by the schools of her native Town. She commenced teaching in district schools when very young, and continued thus employed, with some interruptions, till she was taken with her last sickness in December, 1845. She was very partial to the study of astronomy, and would frequently observe and admire the appearance and relation of the heavenly bodies, considering them as setting forth and proclaiming the power, wisdom, skill, and goodness of the Great Architect. She was early the subject of religious impressions, and made a public profession of religion, uniting with the church in which she was reared in the 16th year of her age. She was very much esteemed for her services in the church, Sabbath-school, etc., and was efficient in her labors for the promotion of the cause of temperance and kindred benevolent enterprises. She was filial, kind, and loving in her associations, and benevolent to all. She died in peace, greatly lamented. The funeral was attended by Rev. H. R. Dunham, of Cortland, of cherished memory in the church, who preached a sermon of tenderness and love from those expressive words, "Jesus wept."

Anna Sheerar; the daughter of John and Susanna Sheerar, was born about the year 1843. She grew up a kind, sprightly, loving girl, fond of books and reading, an attentive, diligent scholar in the common school and the Sabbath-school, and commenced early as teacher in the former. She was an acceptable and successful teacher, and discharged the duties of the profession with great fidelity and zeal. Owing to her arduous labors and exposures in this calling, her health failed and she was for a time an invalid. She, however, recovered essentially, and was married to a Mr. Be-



man, and settled in Pennsylvania, where she lived eminently beloved for a few years, and then died very suddenly, to the great grief of her surviving parents, friends, and acquaintances generally. She had made profession of religion some years previous to her death, a profession which she adorned with a godly life and much activity in the service of her Divine Master.

Mary C. Leach, the daughter of Amos E. and Rebecca Leech, was born about the year 1845. Her advantages for education were only equal to those enjoyed by the average child of our town. She was studious, and gained such proficiency that at an early age she engaged in teaching, with acceptance. She attended with her school on the annual Town convention of schools held in some central and commodious place, where the teachers were not only expected to make a display with their scholars, but to present some important exercises on their own account. On one such occasion the writer was present. When the turn of Miss Leech came, she concentrated what she had to say on the Power of a Word, its influence for good or evil extending to the end of time. When once spoken it could not be recalled. How unspeakably important, then, that no word be uttered except wisely and appropriately. She proceeded with other and like inferences, in a manner which made the exercise very impressive. She was the subject of religious impressions in early life, which resulted in a Christian profession and her uniting with the Congregational church, as did the other two young ladies whose biographies are set forth in this communication. She was exposed to the hardships of the teacher, and was feeble for several years in consequence of the same. She afterwards married a young man whose name was Dorward. Her health was never fully restored, and after lingering some few years, looking to her Saviour for support, she died about two years since in the triumph of the Christian faith.

Thus died three shining lights in the same small church, within a few years, in youth, with the hopes of their associates resting upon them for great usefulness in the promotion of the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world.

One object in grouping together these three biographies is to set forth in one view the evils resulting from the practice that then

obtained of female teachers "boarding round," as every one of these girls contracted the disease of which she died from exposures incident to this practice. It was generally made a condition in the contract in taking a school for the winter, that the teacher should be carried to the school-house in stormy weather and bad traveling; but it was often difficult to secure the performance of the contract. Hence the lamentable consequence in the sickness and death of the teacher, as in the cases herein stated.

De Ette Chamberlain was about the age of Anna Sheerar, and the intimacy between them was very strong. She was an acceptable school teacher, and died a short time after the death of her friend Anna. She made early profession of religion. So it may be said that they were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not far separated.

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## NUMBER XXVIII.

I will give another biographical sketch or two, which I think will be found to contain something of interest.

S. D. Storrs was the son of Deacon Jesse Storrs, of Virgil, and grew up with the ordinary opportunities of common school education. On arriving at majority, he felt desirous of greater educational privileges, and entered a school called the Virgil Literary Institute, in the same Town, whose design was to give to common school teachers an opportunity to become better versed in the branches taught in the common schools; and, generally, to afford to those who wished a chance for improvement. There he engaged earnestly in the studies pursued, and, at the approach of winter, engaged in teaching a common school in the Town. The time had now come to determine on his vocation for life. He opened his mind to his teacher, manifesting his desire to attain a thorough education, but felt the scantiness of his means. The answer of the teacher was, that he could say that in his youth he had himself the

same desire, but was held back by the same reason. He now wished that he had exerted himself and gained an education. This answer decided him to proceed and engage in the struggle. He taught school, cultivated fruit-trees, and employed himself in winters and in vacations, thus gaining means to defray his expenses at the Academy at Homer. There, his circumstances being known, he was aided by occasional loans by Jedediah Barber, Dr. Bradford and perhaps others. Though offered aid by benevolent societies, he uniformly declined the same during the whole course of his study, that he might be free to pursue the calling that seemed best to him when he should leave school. He entered college in New England, where he supported himself in part by the cultivation of a nursery of fruit-trees, and took a thorough course in the college and in the Theological Seminary. To be prepared for usefulness in life was the one object which he had in mind, and since entering the ministry he has found use for his mental and physical powers, and has never regretted the years spent in study. During the three years spent in the Seminary, the troubles in Kansas commenced, and, with three of his classmates, he chose that state as the field for labor in the mission work. In pursuance of his design, he went thither, arriving in Oct., 1857, and, with the exception of two years with the Congregational church in Atchison, after they became self-sustaining, and one year in South-Western Iowa, he has been wholly engaged in mission work in that State. Since the 15th of January, 1872, he has been Superintendent of Missions in Kansas, under the care of the American Home Missionary Society, and has 130 churches under his care. During the year 1875, he traveled about 25,000 miles in the discharge of the duties involved. He has been in the ministry nearly twenty years, and is about fifty-seven years of age. It is to be hoped that his usefulness may be long continued.

One object of the writer of these letters is to give encouragement to young men in enterprise and thrift; and in looking over the Town, his mind has seemed to settle, for a specimen, on our young merchant, W. A. Holton. He was born and raised in this Town, with no remarkable advantages for education. His father died while he was yet young, consequently the care of his rearing and education rested on his mother. He was inclined to study, and made such acquisi-

tions that he taught six terms in school with acceptance. He was, however, partial to the mercantile profession, and went into partnership with a merchant in the place, Mr. A. H. Peckham, and continued with him three years, when they separated. The writer met him afterwards on the road, when he said it was in his mind to build a store on the ground vacated, or soon to be so, which B. J. Jones had occupied. He wished to put up a building that would be an honor to the place and convenient and commodious for the purpose designed. He said it would take all his means to build the store, and that he should have to take credit to supply the same with goods. He proceeded, and built an elegant store-house and filled it with goods, has had a fair portion of the Town trade, sustains the reputation of a fair dealer, and is likely, so far as we can see, to be able to cancel his indebtedness in the near future. He has been honored by the people of the Town with the offices of Town Clerk and Justice of the Peace. He is about thirty years of age.

James H. Shults, son of David Shults, was also reared in this Town. He grew up with the ordinary facilities for acquiring an education. He became desirous of making acquisitions in education, and progressed so well that he graduated at the Normal School, and ultimately was placed in the same institution as a Professor, which position he occupied for a year or two, when he was induced to resign his place, with a view to accept a call to the principalship and chair of Latin and Greek in the Cleveland (Ohio) High School, at a salary of \$2,000, and will leave very soon to take up his residence in that city. This resignation of his position in the Cortland Normal School is much regretted.

Though it may be thought that the list of eminent individuals, named in previous numbers, as former or present residents of our Town, has been rather exhaustive, yet there are those remaining that I would have noticed but for want of space. Among these is Dr. Miller, of East Virgil, the lecturer on physiology, and the venerable N. R. Locke, formerly our Postmaster, and father of Nasby, the editor of the Toledo *Blade*.

## NUMBER XXIX.

WHAT I have written of distinguished personages of our Town, closes what I had designed to say on that subject—not that the list could not be extended, but it has not been my intention to exhaust the subject, but to leave something to be said by others.

The question now arises, Why should Virgil and other rural districts produce a greater number of eminent individuals in proportion to the population than cities and large villages? No one who has given much thought to this question will doubt the fact implied. If you, or any one, should go to Syracuse and trace to their origin, the distinguished men there, it will be found that a large percentage of the same have come from Pompey; and the like will be the result of any investigation that shall be made from New York, Philadelphia, Washington and all the large cities and villages in our country. Why is this? Do not the cities and villages furnish greater facilities to the youth to become eminent than the rural towns and districts? Certainly. The question then returns—What makes the difference? A short incident said to have occurred in some of the past ages will illustrate this point, and lead to a true solution. It is said that a certain king had a wise counselor whose services he highly valued, and felt that his aid in the government was indispensable. This counsellor asked of the king permission to be absent a year or two. The king remonstrated. The minister answered, he had a son who had arrived at an age that required that he should give him the learning and instruction indispensable to his usefulness and respectability in future life; and he wanted the time asked for to give him the learning and discipline so necessary for him. The king said, Go! but take my son along that he may share the same opportunity. At the time appointed, the wise man returned with the lads, and presented them to the king. The king proceeded to examine the two young men, when he found that his own son was greatly inferior in acquisitions to the son of the counselor. He inquired for the cause. The counselor answered that they had shared, equally, in his instructions; but he said that while his own son had improved his opportunities, sensible that he must depend upon his own efforts for success and advancement in life, he could

not conceal from the son of the king, the fact that the people would be dependent on him, instead of his being dependent on the people, for success and distinction in life. The children and youth in cities and villages fail, in a majority of cases to appreciate their privileges, and allow those from the rural districts to outstrip them in the race for advancement and distinction. They are deceived and flattered by their position, shirk their lessons and examinations held to test their progress, and leave school greatly in the rear of those with fewer facilities; and find, when too late, their irretrievable loss. Here is another illustration of a remark in a preceding number, "that the merit of success is in proportion to obstacles overcome."

### NUMBER XXX.

I shall not, in this number, enlarge on the list of individuals from this Town deserving to be noticed with credit, though I might do so without exhausting the subject, but proceed to inquire for the main cause why we have so enviable a record to present. Allusion has been made to some facts connected here; but the main one has not been presented. All the advance which our race has made in intelligence and morals is traceable to the influence of the Gospel or the Christian religion.

Would any one presume to say that without this instrumentality numerous individuals would rise above the mass, and make such a showing in the world? It is the *church* and the *school-house* to which we must refer when searching for these eminent and desirable results.

A young friend of the writer returned from a series of services which he had rendered in the construction of the railroad connecting the two oceans at the Isthmus of Darien, laboring on depots and bridges; and stated, in the account of the people in that locality, that they had no meetings or schools and were very much debased. So it would be in any locality without the means alluded to. This is not said ostentatiously, as though I would represent the

religious or scientific privileges here *ever* were remarkable. Far from it. The commencement was made amid great disadvantages, and the progress has been with weakness, difficulty and sacrifice. Very few Sabbaths have passed since 1802, when religious services were not held. Rev. Seth Williston was early on the ground to watch for the spiritual interests of the sparse population. He was here in 1802, and called together those who were favorable to the interests of religion, and proposed to them the question, whether they would choose to have religious services on the Sabbath, and whether they would endeavor to sustain them. He was a missionary, and could not be present very frequently. He must see to matters of the kind in other places, as Homer, Dryden, Lisle, etc. The people responded to the suggestion, and agreed to assemble on the Sabbath and hold services, having obtained the consent of James Wood, of Dryden, and Prince Freeman of this Town, to be present and offer prayer, and James Glenny to read sermons. The few who attended gathered from an area of some eight to ten miles. They heard and united with the prayers of those devoted men, listened to the reading of the sermons, and were edified, and united in singing the praises of God, led by that practiced and able singer, Moses Rice, Esq. The interest became such that Mr. Williston considered the time to have come to unfurl the standard of the Cross, and he proceeded to organize a church of eight members, three of whom lived in Dryden, four to five miles distant from the place of meeting. This was done on the 28th of February, 1805, styled the First Congregational church in Virgil. The church was without stated preaching several years. They felt severely their destitute condition, which will be seen by the following vote, passed December, 1806: "That the church will see to the satisfying of Rev. W. Darrow, for two Sabbaths' service a year, at five dollars a Sabbath, to attend on Sacramental occasions, and also to take the oversight of the church for the present."

The following are the names of some of the early fathers who have long since gone to their rest: Silas Lincoln, Jonathan Edwards, Jotham and Benjamin Glazier, Benjamin Cleaveland, John E. Roe, Eli Pickit, Simeon Luce, Jephtha Branch and Thomas Luce. Some of the mothers in Israel were Charlotte Roe, Lucinda Edwards, Hannah Sheldon, Hephzibah Osborn, Lydia Glazier and

Prudence Bouton. The church struggled on through various difficulties, with preaching part of the time, meeting in various places where they could, after the "Center School-house" was burnt in 1818, till the present meeting-house could be used for that purpose. This was put up in 1821. It was two or three years before it was enclosed and made comfortable, and it was not seated till 1831. Its location, near the old burying-ground, was found inconvenient, and it was removed to its present site in 1834. About 300 members have been added to the church, the greatest share of whom have passed away or removed, so that its number of resident members is less than thirty. In 1871, thorough repairs were put upon the church edifice. It is now respectable in appearance, and is very comfortable and convenient. The ministers who have preached stately in the church are Rev. Messrs. Wallace, Hitchcock, Dunning, Robertson, Bradford, Bliss, Chaffee, Headley, Walcott, Thacher, Bonson, Bates, Otis, Kinney, Burgess, Marshall, Raymond, Humphreys and Knieskern.

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#### NUMBER XXXI.

**I**n now proceed to give some facts in the history of other churches in our Town. A Baptist church was constituted in August, 1807. They held meetings in private houses, school-houses, barns, etc., and had preaching from Elders Whipple, Bennet, of Homer, Peter and William Powers and Robinson, till about 1826 or '27, when it was disbanded, and re-organized June 23, 1830. In 1831 they built a very respectable church edifice. The progress of the church was with much labor and sacrifice, and in several periods the prospects were dark; but the church has continued with varied scenes of adversity and prosperity till the present time; and during the last year, the church edifice has been so thoroughly repaired as to be as good as new, and was dedicated in February last. It presents an imposing appearance to the traveler approaching from the north or east, and its internal structure corresponds with its outward



appearance. The church has the labors of its resident minister, Elder Phillips, with a good attendance, and appearances are encouraging. The early fathers and mothers in the church were earnest and persevering. They assembled from Sabbath to Sabbath, and heard preaching, when they could have it, and otherwise, the time of service was improved in devotional exercises of prayer, singing and conference. The writer remembers the singing with much interest, when such of their number as Peter Powers and Jesse Johnson and their wives would engage in singing psalms and hymns in such tunes as Mear, Old Hundred, Windham and Coronation, with their honest faces directed upward with earnest devotion, while they dwelt with emphasis on the long notes peculiar to such tunes. Some of the fathers were Samuel Kingman, living where Robert Purvis now resides in Harford, and Prince Freeman, living where his son Elijah now lives, on Luce Hill, who were the deacons. Robert Ryan, living on the State road, John Snyder, on Snyder Hill, Moses Olmsted and Nathan Foster, about a mile westerly from the Corners, and Juba Smith and others in different directions around. The Sabbath was sure to find them gathered from their distant homes to some place agreed upon, where they would hold their services and impart to each other words of encouragement, admonition and consolation. All these, having served their generation, have long since gone to their rest, yet their names have left a savor behind which will remain with the present generation so long as any shall live to retain a remembrance of them.

The ministers preaching stately since its re-organization have been Elders Andrews, Robinson, Clark, Ainsworth, Cole, Jones, Lyon, De Witt, Mann, Stark, Crosson, and perhaps others. Two of the ancient men came to their death very suddenly, each by the fall of a tree,—Deacon Kingman, in the early part of 1816, and Elder Robinson, about forty years since. It is estimated that their present number is about *forty*.

The Methodists held meetings frequently, and had preaching from Rev. G. W. Densmore and others, previous to 1830. In that year there was much religious interest among them, and many were added to their number. In 1831, their present church edifice was built. Previous to 1830, they held meetings at Mr. Hannah's and at Wm. Keech's. Afterwards, their meetings were at Esq. West's,

and at Thomas Mott's. The numerous meetings held in 1830 were had in the Presbyterian church, then standing near the old burying-ground, and in school-houses. Some of the fathers in the church were Hannahs, Palmontere, West, Baker, and Mott. Some principal leading men since have borne the name of Hutchings, Mott, Bloomer, and others. This church has also shared in the changes and trials incident to the commencement and growth of a church. Its present condition may be said to be rather prosperous. It is more numerous than either of the other churches, though we cannot state its numbers. The preachers laboring with them since 1830 have been Rev. Messrs. Mason, Wood, Bronson, Harris, Mineir, Worthing, Hamilton, Porter, McDowell, Fox, Wire, Mynard, Hewitt, Torry, Ercanbrack, Hyde, House, Hinman, Bunnell, Luce, and Steele.

A Free Baptist church, in the west part of the Town, was organized in 1822, with six members. They held meetings in "Ball's School-house," so-called, till they built their present meeting-house, often called the "West Meeting-house," in 1838. Its preachers have been Elders Daniels, Hills, Darling, Gardner, Dodge, Moulton, Krum, Crandall, Griffiths, Russell, Davis, and doubtless some others. Some of the leading men and fathers have been Oliver Tyler, John Hill, Amos Daniels, all of whom have passed away, but are remembered with affection by their survivors in the church, and in the community. With our present means, we shall be unable to state the number of members.

A small church of Congregationalists was formed in the east part of the Town, in 1830, by Rev. Eleazar Luce. It was ministered to by Rev. Messrs. Luce, Axtell, Chaffee, and others. In 1837, it had thirty-one members. It has since been dissolved, and the members have joined other churches. The Methodists have also long had a branch of their church in East Virgil, and have had preaching there a portion of the time by the same who ministered at the village.

There have been seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, in which all the churches have participated. The years 1813, 1820, 1830, '31 and '32 were characterized as such. In 1831, the Baptist and Methodist churches were built, and the Presbyterian church was seated.

## NUMBER XXXII.

BEFORE I proceed farther, I will say that a few names more should have been mentioned in the list of Methodist ministers preaching here since 1853. The names to be added are Barnes, Howland, and two different men by the name of Brown.

We have now come to a chapter of inferences. The efficient instrumentalities have been set forth. To the *church* and the primary *school*, we owe the enviable showing we have been enabled to make, of distinguished individuals reared in our Town, and are not through yet, as there are numerous others that deserve notice equally with those referred to heretofore, which will occupy our next number, notwithstanding the encouragement derived from what has been written about closing up that department.

In looking over the hasty sketch of the churches given in the last number, and of the schools in previous numbers, it will be apparent to every considerate mind, that the progress of each of these departments has been with much difficulty, weakness and embarrassment; yet the motto has been throughout, "faint," yet, by the help of God, "pursuing," It has often been clear, in our religious history, that "man's necessity has been God's opportunity." "When brought low, God has helped us." And though it has often been prophesied that one and another of the churches *must* disband, they yet remain. All have ever been much weakened by emigration. Many have left, assuring themselves that they would thus better their condition, and others have been persuaded away, frequently to their hurt, though it may be acknowledged that there has not been room for the expansion desired. Yet if a place is sold, there must, of necessity, be a buyer; and the changes have been mostly to the disadvantage of the moral interests of the Town. It has been said that *our* churches are nurseries to churches in more populous places; and, indeed, it has been remarked that those churches depend largely upon the rural churches to supply their waste, by death, removals, and apostasy. In connection with their own labors, and the aid thus received from the rural churches, those in villages can live and prosper; but what of the feeble churches, constantly exposed to this process of exhaustion? Is it not a *mutual* interest that is to be

sustained? Is not the cause a *common* one? What if the "feeble churches," so called, be suffered to languish and die? When the streams are cut off from a river, what becomes of the river?

There is another view of the general subject that is painful, which is this—that our youth go out of Town to procure their education. It will be noticed that those who have signalized themselves by their ability and success, have derived their education from the slender means enjoyed here. Before it was the practice to attend foreign schools, or those out of Town, the youth availed themselves of the means in their reach, and turned every opportunity to the best account. It may almost be said that they were "self-taught." There was a time when no opportunity was enjoyed—in school or out of school—to gain any systematic instruction in writing compositions. In these circumstances, some among our most intelligent and aspiring young people conceived the idea of having a *Commonplace-book*, to be circulated, in which compositions should be written by those who would undertake to do so. It is impossible to say how much this device had to do with the success of the several able editors of newspapers, that have arisen in our Town, and had no means of making their acquisitions, except such as could be had inside of old Virgil.

The great advantage enjoyed by the youth here fifty years since, over the present generation, was that they were associated together in making their attainments, whereas our present youth are effectually dis-sociated. Formerly they were mutual aids and stimulants to each other; *now* they are separated, attending different schools, and return to spend their vacations at different times, so that they scarcely retain a knowledge of each other, and the motive and the means for mutual improvement are wanting.

Something is done by institutes and school conventions, which, it would seem, might, in part, obviate this difficulty; but a convention of schools once in the year is a very insufficient means to accomplish or secure the desired result. Doubtless much advantage is supposed to be derived to those villages where such advanced schools are held. The most enterprising youth of the adjacent towns are gathered, and the meetings and lectures are numerous attended, and the resident population exult in their prosperity, and though their success is thus promoted, the effect on the population of the rural towns is very

*adverse*—and this effect, so much to be deplored, will not be removed until schools are established in every town, of sufficient merit to enable the youth there to make all the acquisitions necessary to fit them for intelligent merchants, tradesmen and farmers, or even newspaper editors. This is an unnatural state of things; when it is to be remedied, we cannot foresee. It is partially done now in some places, by what are termed Graded Schools. It is to be hoped that success may attend these efforts; and that the evil, so much to be deplored, may be removed.

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### NUMBER XXXIII.

THE writer of these articles has supposed that his labors in this direction were ended, and felt a kind of relief in the reflection that a respite might now be had from this laborious work. In this I was, however, mistaken. You recollect that you gave me a slip from a paper called the "*Daily Journal*," published, as I understand, in Jamestown, Chautauqua Co., in this State, calling in question the substance of one of my articles published in your paper early in February last, respecting the origin of the Erie Railroad. The article referred to seems to be editorial, as no name is subscribed to it, and it does not present the appearance of being the production of a correspondent.

Having been led to state many things relating to events transpiring in the history of Virgil, in the county of Cortland, my native Town; as an impartial historian, it was incumbent on me to set forth, before the general public, what has long been known in this vicinity, to wit—that the New York & Erie Railroad was projected by one of the citizens of this Town. The fact was fully known in a small circle at the time, and was fearlessly published by those familiar with it everywhere, and at all times, and *never* heretofore questioned, to our knowledge. To sit down deliberately to prove and confirm this fact to the people in central or southern New York would be like attempting to prove that coal was to be found in Pennsylvania, or that the sun rises in the east. However, for the

benefit of any candid minds that might be staggered by the considerations set forth in the article referred to, a few facts will be presented. It is not understood that any one complains, who claims in his own person or for his friend that *he* is the projector of this work, but that it is "*fishy*" or "improbable" that "*two years before* the feasibility of a railroad had been demonstrated either in England or in the United States, Mr. Bouton was looking up a line of railroad from New York city through the southern tier of counties." It is also said, "The article of Mr. Bouton looks like an attempt to falsify the facts of history, and to turn a good deal of credit where none is due." No one living at the time when this project was first set forth, would have thought, from the reception it met with *then* and for *years* afterward, that the *credit* would be worth contending for. It is not easy to conceive, at this late day, how much of sport and ridicule was consequent upon the publication of the scheme. The most respectable appellation employed was, that it was extremely *visionary*. Great stress is laid on the fact, that we claim the plan to have been set forth so *early*, and it was said that the locomotive was not in use so early, and that railroads were not then in successful operation in England or in the United States, etc. So far as the locomotive is concerned, it is entirely foreign to the subject. The railroads in England were operated by horse-power, as they are now in our cities, and it was conceded that a railroad was preferable to a wagon road. The writer goes on to give dates of the establishment of different railroads. In a work published in Hartford, in 1873, by J. B. Burr & Hyde, compiled from the writings of Horace Greeley, Leon Case, John B. Gough and other eminent writers, it is said on page 534, "Horse railroads were increasing in numbers in England—five having been chartered by act of Parliament in 1805, sixteen in 1815, and thirty-two in 1825." The first railroad in the State of New York, from Albany to Schenectady, was chartered in 1828, though not completed till 1831. The discussions which led to this act were progressing at the time when the plan for the Erie road was published by us. The article published in the Cortland *Observer*, setting forth the same, came out in the same number that recorded the death of Governor Clinton, and in black lines, on account of that mournful event, which we considered a dark omen, and supposed that it might put an end to the plan. I

believe it is generally understood that the death of Governor Clinton occurred on the 11th of February, 1828. Any one who will consult the published proceedings of the festive gathering of early settlers of Virgil, in 1853, will find in the address of W. E. Gee, on page 39, an extended reference to this subject, fixing the date at 1828. This was in the immediate vicinity and in the hearing of those personally acquainted with the facts. I took the pamphlet containing those proceedings, to Albany early in 1858 and presented it to Dr. Woolworth, the Secretary of the Board of Regents and keeper of the State Library, saying to him that in reading it he would find an account of the origin of the Erie railroad. He asked, at what time. I answered, in 1828. He said they had been able to trace it back only to 1829. He said that he wanted it, that he might place it in the State Library, and I presume it is there now, saving from oblivion this fact claimed at present to be rather important. Dr. Woolworth had been Preceptor of the Cortland Academy and an old acquaintance of mine. I then stated, perhaps unnecessarily, that though the pamphlet was an unpretending one, yet the facts contained in it were *authentic*. He replied that he had no doubt of it. It is but reasonable to suppose that the writer of the production under consideration has access to the "Gazeteer of the State of New York," embracing a comprehensive view of the history, etc., of every county, city, town, village and locality, by J. H. French, published in Syracuse, N. Y., by E. Pearsall Smith, in 1860. In this volume, on page 255, will be found, in a note near the bottom of the left hand column, this entry, connected with other facts in the history of Virgil:

"As early as 1828, in a series of articles in the *Cortland Observer*, Nathaniel Bouton, a farmer in this Town, thoroughly advocated the construction of a railroad through the southern tier of counties." Both this notice and that in the address of Mr. Gee were without the knowledge or suggestion of the writer. It seems to be wondered at that Mr. Bouton, years before the line of the road was located, could have been looking up a route to *terminate at Dunkirk*. This Mr. Bouton was early in advocacy of the Erie Canal, and all other internal improvements, such as churches, school-houses, roads and bridges, and was, in general, a man of sagacity and forecast, and *never an afternoon man*.

As the veracity of the writer of these articles is questioned, it may be well to refer the writer of the article under consideration to the members of Assembly from Chautauqua for 1858: Hon. Henry Bliss, Sherman P. O., and Hon. Charles B. Green, Ellington P. O. They may not be living in those places now, but if they are it would be well to ask them if they knew the member from Cortland, occupying, as will be seen by the diagram of the Assembly Chamber, seat No. 114.

When the projector of the road had become assured that it would succeed, he said, "The road will go, and now it is time to produce fruit to be carried on it." He had an orchard, but he had but few kinds of apples fit for market. He had the Road Island Greening, English Streak, Seek-no-further, and Romanite. The Greening would not constitute an assortment, and the others had not merit enough to justify their cultivation. He found a tree about seven miles off, that produced fruit which he thought, from all the knowledge he could get, would answer his purpose. It was from a cion brought from Massachusetts. He proceeded to take cions from this tree, and grafted them on about eighty trees. Not a very great number it is true, but considerable for the time and place. These trees produced a full crop in 1846—the same year in which the road was completed to Binghamton, and in which he died; but the apples were carried to market on that road, and brought, it is said, five dollars per barrel. After his death, the writer bought the farm of the heirs and realized a large amount of fruit from these trees. Inquiry was made for the name of this apple. At length a nurseryman came and examined them, and said that it was the *Roxbury Russet*, and that it was very gratifying to know that such an apple had obtained such a foothold here. My father had started a nursery of grafted fruit in 1809, pasting the wound with *blue clay*, mixed up in a sap trough. He also sowed a quantity of seeds to grow a nursery of *natural* fruit. In this nursery the writer was employed in cleaning out and cultivating the young seedlings, when they had attained the third leaf. He has followed the same through the several stages of growth, change and decay, till a few years since they were removed that they might not longer cumber the ground. The writer has outlived those trees, and is still vigorous and able to meet and refute a calumny. It need not be expected that any fur-



ther attention will be given to such criticisms till some man shall come forward and claim in his own person, or that of a friend, the authorship of this project.

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## NUMBER XXXIV.

PREVIOUS to 1871, there were erected many neat and commodious residences throughout our Town; but it was remarked that building in the village had nearly ceased. Only the house of Mrs. Jenkins, of moderate dimensions, had been built for several years, and many in the village had become very innocent of paint, and it was a rather common impression that it had about arrived at its zenith. So much had been said respecting the impracticability of building up the village, that a kind of depression was on the minds of most of the people, and it was yielded to as a fact, that this place must submit to be eclipsed by surrounding villages and towns. The church edifice, like the other structures, gave outward indications of decay. This state of things affected a few minds very deeply, and a resolution was formed that an effort should be made to change the aspect. Perhaps no building presented a more gloomy appearance than did the Presbyterian Church. Amid many discouragements and prophecies of failure, it was undertaken, and in a short time it was apparent that success would attend the exertions of those engaged in this enterprise. Seldom has the progress of any work towards completion been looked upon with more wonder and surprise. It was foretold that this effort would be a failure, or that those assuming responsibility would involve themselves so deeply that it would be difficult to extricate themselves. However, what was embraced in the original plan was accomplished, and the building was dedicated to the worship of the Sacred Three in the forepart of January, 1872. The remark that there had come a depression over the minds of the people about building and repairing, had reference only to the *village*. Other parts of the Town proceeded as usual, and houses and barns were erected, as the pleasure or need

of the people suggested. In the same season of 1871, several buildings were erected in different parts, some of which were of noble dimensions. Of these a description has been given up to August, 1874, embracing the Baptist Church. Since that time the M. E. Church edifice has been erected, with its stately proportions, costing \$7,000 or more, of which a circumstantial account was given for the press, by Rev. J. W. Steele, and published soon after its completion, in the winter of 1875-'76.

David R. Price built a new house, reported to be well planned and furnished with exquisite skill and workmanship. Its cost has been estimated at from three to four thousand dollars. Isaac B. Bloomer and John Bays, on the State road, each did such thorough work in repairing their houses that they became essentially new, and are very neat and commodious, and an honor to the vicinity as well as to the owners and builders. J. B. Rounds built a barn seventy feet in length and thirty in width, with stone work three feet high for the foundation. The posts are sixteen feet.

People in the village began to think "that some things could be done as well as others," and commenced on repairs. The residence near the church referred to above, of M. L. Sheerar, was thoroughly renovated and presents a fine appearance. John M. Frank soon afterwards commenced to improve the appearance of his house, and exhibits his perseverance by continuing to paint and add to the original structure; and when the whole shall be finished it will doubtless add much to the appearance of that locality. Charles Williams built a very respectable village residence two years since, which we regret to say was destroyed by fire about a year afterwards. Other houses were built in the region around, among which is one of very respectable appearance by Edwin Branch, in the west part of the Town, and one in the east part by John Shevalier, very highly spoken of as being of noble dimensions and superior finish and appearance. But the enthusiasm for building was thoroughly awakened in the village, and the year 1873 will be long remembered as that in which many elegant structures were reared.

As the battle of Bunker Hill was the leading engagement of the Revolution, so the elevation in our village, known by that name, was the scene of preparation by the removal of the building of noble dimensions, erected there by General Knapp, in 1804. It was

set in the north part of the village and is used by E. Crain as a ware-room for his business of wagon and carriage making. It was 30x40 feet, and two stories high, and a wonder to the natives in the early days in which it was built. This removal prepared the way for the erection of the splendid residence of Dr. Muncey. This building is forty-one feet front and thirty-five feet deep, twenty feet high; lower story, ten feet high, finished with hard wood with exquisite workmanship. The doors are cherry and ash alternate. Kitchen done off for convenience; pantry, and closets for wardrobe, etc., finished with chestnut and cherry. A convenient number of windows—glass, 14x30 inches,—one bay-window finished with cherry and ash; stairs, cherry and ash alternate, with white oak railing; parlor, finished with cherry, ash, and butternut, with exquisite moulding; cellar, 21x23 feet; building and stoop, covered with tin roof; cost, about \$4,000. W. A. Holton built a mammoth store on the lot made vacant by the removal of the store-house previously occupied by B. J. Jones. This store-house was removed by R. E. Holton about one-half mile, and changed into a very respectable residence. The new store of W. A. Holton is seventy feet in length, twenty in width, and twenty-five feet posts; cellar, under the whole; cistern, with capacity of five hundred barrels of water, with force pump on the outside and also in the inside; tin roof; store-room, 42x50 feet, completely finished, with show-cases, stools, chairs, chandelier, and everything for convenience in a country store; upper story, finished in rooms with convenience and taste; a very convenient room below for courts or for meeting of Town board or similar meetings; tin roof; the whole cost estimated at \$4,000. The Baptist church has been noticed in a previous number. F. T. Hovey built a residence of fine appearance on his lot westerly from the "Village Green." The length is thirty feet; width, twenty-two; with posts twenty feet; ten feet high in the clear, below; with nineteen windows—four lights, 14x30. In the rear is an appendage 12x16 feet, for culinary purposes, etc. W. H. Williams built at the same time a very respectable residence nearly opposite. In addition to all this done in building, many houses have been much improved by painting, etc. It may also be said that one story has been added to a portion of the building occupied by E. Winslow, for store and post-office. David Trapp also erected a splendid

house in the west part of the Town: two stories, with rooms spacious and airy, and finished in exquisite style, costing over \$4,000. Samuel Hutchings erected a barn fifty feet in length, thirty-four feet wide, and twenty high above the basement, which is eight feet; two bays for hay sixteen feet deep, with a floor seventeen feet. Standing on a conspicuous place, and well painted, it presents an imposing appearance for miles around.

This building interest was very much facilitated by the discovery of a bed of very good sand, conveniently located. All the building mentioned, commencing with that of Dr. Muncey, was done in 1873. Captain S. M. Byram did, also, much for the improvement of his grist-mill,—siding and painting, on the outside, and in needed and thorough repairs inside, in the making of a new water-wheel, etc. This is called the Virgil Spring Mills, from the fact that it derives its propelling power mostly from the water of several large springs which are permanent, though not always sufficient for the demands of a large surrounding population. It is now doing a very lively business under the charge of the young Messrs. Rease. One great advantage is its very eligible location in the midst of a thriving community. Mr. Byram has also painted and much improved his house, so that now it presents a neat and becoming appearance.

Ebenezer Perkins has built a ware-house for the convenience of his business. The length is thirty-eight feet, and width, twenty-eight feet, with nineteen feet posts. It is painted in such a way as to present a very tasty appearance. He has also built a shop for blacksmithing, 26x20 feet. David Shultz has erected a large and commodious house. Its dimensions I cannot give. Henry Lewis has erected a house on the State road, one and one-half miles from the village. Charles Griswold made an old house nearly new about two years since, which is now painted and respectable in appearance. John O. Hammond, son of the late Thomas Hammond, has renovated the house on that place, and repaired the same so as to be almost new, adding much to its comfort and convenience.

George Fisher built in 1873 a horse barn thirty-eight feet in length, and twenty-four feet in width, and sixteen feet posts, on a good foundation of stone work, painted red and trimmed with white. He has also removed and improved a very large barn, placing it in a convenient situation. Though so much was done in building,

last year, the enthusiasm is not exhausted. Mr. B. B. Elster is building a residence that promises to be a credit to the builder and also to the village. Abram Sager is erecting a residence of noble dimensions, about three-fourths of a mile west from the village, which will be finished in the most approved style, costing \$1,600 or more. Mr. Pinney is building a house on the Cortland road, from the village about two miles, which, from the known energy and taste of the builder, may be expected to be an honor both to the owner and to the neighborhood. Besides what has been mentioned, there is evidence of improvement generally, indicated by the interest shown in moving barns and other buildings to more convenient situations, and in their thorough repairs. In short, business is lively, crops are abundant, and we have had noticeable exemption from casualties by fire, wind and flood. We have had convenient rain and sunshine and the growth of a very luxuriant crop of vegetation such as has not been in the memory of "the oldest inhabitant."

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## NUMBER XXXV.

CHARLES W. JOHNSON reared a large and elegant barn, with a basement, near his house in the Village, and has since repaired and very much improved his house, rendering it not only comfortable but neat and tasty in appearance. Nathaniel Lewis has built a new house in the south part of the Village, of very respectable appearance. J. C. Seamans has built a residence, essentially new, embracing but a small part of the materials of one previously occupying the same ground. It is of noble proportions, and, when well painted, will add much to the appearance of that part of the Village where it is located. Several buildings have been treated with new coats of paint, among which are those of G. W. Elster, J. P. Price and others. The Village has also been much improved in appearance and convenience, by the railing in front of the Baptist church, and by a walk to the M. E. church. A barn of moderate dimensions has been built by W. A. Holton, directly north from the hotel, and

a barn on the lot occupied by Elder Haskell has also been repaired and enclosed with new materials, giving a sprightly appearance to the immediately locality. Henry Smith, near the north line of the Town, has renovated and very much improved the appearance of one of his barns. Jared Munson has moved two barns, placed them adjoining, with a basement and other improvements, for convenience to himself and comfort to his animals. Harrison Smith, a mile north from the village, has replaced a rookery of a horse barn with a new one. Samuel Hutchings, who had a splendid barn, described in a former number as capable of being seen for miles away, has obscured the view by another barn of nearly the same description, though somewhat less in dimensions, but painted as well as the other. John O. Hammond has, since the last writing, given his house a thorough painting, which causes it to look very comely and pleasant. In the same neighborhood, a much needed and permanent bridge has been built across what is called the "Virgil Creek." The old school-house adjoining the west meeting-house has been replaced by a new, convenient and tasty edifice, presenting a great contrast to its predecessor, which was built in about the year 1808. Another number will be given to complete what is to be noted concerning other new buildings in the Town.

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#### NUMBER XXXVI.

WITHIN the last three years, R. C. Tyler has built a fine new barn. Frank Saltsman has erected a new horse and carriage barn of good size, well finished and painted. J. C. House has remodeled, changed and very much improved the house on the farm long occupied by his father and the family; and Augustus Bell has thoroughly and tastefully painted his house. W. P. Mynard has erected a splendid barn, seventy-two feet in length and twenty-six feet in width, with sixteen feet posts above the basement, which is eight feet high. It is on a firm foundation of masonry, well finished and painted. He has also built a commodious corn-house and granary, painted like the barn.

In the north-west part of the town, we find several buildings recently repaired and painted--and more that are new. Jesse Trapp's house, formerly, now owned by his son, was thoroughly repaired so as to be nearly new, a few years since. Thomas Gillen's house has new blinds and a new roof. Frank Yaples has built a house of respectable dimensions, two stories high, said to be well-finished inside, and soon to be painted on the outside. Frederick Hollenbeck has built a fine residence, the upright portion of which is forty-two feet by sixteen, two stories high, and the wing twenty-four by seventeen feet. It is entirely finished, except that he has it in contemplation to add something in the line of a veranda or stoop. It has an excellent cellar, added to which is a good and commodious cistern.

On the road from Dryden to Cortland, we find Warren Hoaglin, who has built during the present season a horse and carriage barn, thirty-four by fifty feet, with twenty feet posts, finished and painted. George Moore has erected, during the present season, an addition to his barn, twenty-four by thirty feet, with sixteen feet posts. The whole building is now sixty-four by thirty feet. N. P. Pulling has also built, during the present season, a house essentially new, which is nearly, or quite, finished; is painted and very respectable in appearance. Cornelius Veeder has painted and put a new roof on his house, with other improvements. L. B. Ball has built a residence of imposing appearance on the State road, about one and one-half miles westward from the village. The upright portion is twenty-two by thirty feet, with twenty-one feet posts. The wing is sixteen by twenty-two feet, with twelve feet posts. There is a remarkably fine cellar, with faultless walls, seven and one-half feet deep. Water is brought by a pipe into the kitchen and is already running, and is also carried into the cellar to be in readiness for any arrangement that may hereafter be made. The rooms are arranged with much skill for convenience and comfort. The glass in the lower story is thirteen by thirty inches, and above it is thirteen by twenty-eight inches. The house is painted and otherwise nearly completed.

John McKinney, in the same neighborhood, has changed a house of ordinary appearance to one that is very respectable, by putting on improvements, rendering the building almost as good as new. The school district, long known as the "Morse Hill District," has

built a respectably appearing new school-house. Emery Gee erected a new residence in 1876, which is still in process of completion, and is marked by all the characteristics that combine to render a home desirable and attractive, even to running water for domestic purposes in the kitchen. J. B. Hutchings erected a new barn of stately proportions, it being forty by fifty feet, with twenty feet posts, on a good foundation, with a bay twenty by forty feet, floor sixteen by forty feet, and stable fourteen by forty feet. The old barn, twenty-six by thirty-six feet, with sixteen feet posts, has been moved and placed adjoining a portion of the new, and newly inclosed. It was formerly thought to be a good sized barn, but now the contrast between the two is great. Abram Sager has built a new barn, thirty-six by twenty-five feet, with sixteen feet posts above the basement, which is eight feet, all finished and painted. Robert Sager has removed a frame, and finished a barn, making it essentially new, and has it painted. L. V. Terpenning has built a convenient and handsome horse and carriage barn, twenty-six by forty feet, with eighteen feet posts. Dr. Tripp has thoroughly renovated and repaired a barn of moderate dimensions on his place. Norman Bailey, who lives half a mile west of the village, has built and painted a barn on his premises, retaining but little of the one previously occupying the same ground, adding greatly to the appearance and value of his place. Myron Ballou has erected, finished and painted a barn of stately size, it being seventy feet long by thirty feet wide, with twenty feet posts. A. E. H. Ladd is making great improvements in his residence, which will be better appreciated when completed. Robert Sager has commenced to build spacious additions to his house. They are now complete and render the residence very tasty and becoming.

The writer is indebted to J. Shevalier, Esq., for information respecting the east part of the Town.

On the road north from John Patten's, a new house and barn have been built within the past two or three years, now owned by Michael Delaney. On lot thirty, W. Holden, of Syracuse, caused a large barn to be built in 1875, with basement; and in 1876, a first-class house, painted and finished in excellent style. "Two years ago," Mr. Shevalier says, "our church underwent a thorough repair, from basement to roof. All of the old building that was



left was the naked frame—all the rest is new and bright." Two years since Mr. Shevalier himself built a horse and carriage barn, all painted and finished, with running water in the same. Two years since, E. D. Angel built a substantial barn, thirty by forty feet; and during the present season, E. B. Husted has also built a new barn.

In the west part of the Town, George Tyler has built during the present season a horse and carriage barn, thirty-six by fifty-four feet, with twenty feet posts, which is well finished and painted, and standing on a firm foundation. George P. Dann has repainted the exterior of his house; and in the interior, it has been re-painted, papered and otherwise very much improved. He has also removed and fitted up a barn with new foundation and new covering, making the same essentially new. He has also just finished, with the exception of paint, a new granary and corn-house, sixteen by twenty feet, with twelve feet posts—the same being complete with the latest improvements. Chester Simonds has removed and done off a barn of ordinary dimensions, adding much to the convenience of his place. Horace Fitts, in the west part of the Town, has, since the last writing, removed and thoroughly renovated his house, re-arranging the inside, and painting the exterior. The school district known as the "Frank district" has commenced to build a new school-house, and in two other districts the question of erecting new school-houses has been agitated. It should have been sooner said that E. Winslow has added much to the appearance and convenience of his place by building and painting. And still the enthusiasm for building and repairing continues unabated.

Edwin Branch has rebuilt his house, which was consumed last autumn, with the same kind of workmanship that obtained in the original structure. It is greatly to his credit that he has sustained himself with firmness through all the embarrassment incident to the casualty. George H. Ladd has built a neat dwelling house adjoining the Methodist church. Asa Price is renovating and much enlarging his residence. R. C. Tyler has very much improved his barn, rendering it very much more capacious.

A new school-house has been built in what has been called the "Raymond District."

Mr. David Shults had two barns burnt by lightning recently, and is now replacing them by one eighty feet long by forty feet wide, with twenty feet posts above the basement.

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## NUMBER XXXVII.

I have thought best, that, inasmuch as some facts have transpired that seem to have no particular connection with any subject treated of heretofore, a fragmentary chapter be inserted, embracing facts having no special mutual dependence on each other, and are here placed promiscuously.

To show the great difference in mail facilities in early days compared with the present, I would say that, being at the Village some forty years since, I was accosted by Thomas Hammond, a neighbor, who had a bundle of flax under his arm. He asked me to buy it to enable him to take a letter from the Post-office, which he had not the means to do. *Now* it is imperative on the sender to pre-pay, and the postage is so reduced that it is merely nominal.

Reference has been had in other pages to four men who fell from apple trees in gathering fruit. One of these was John Tyler, or as generally called, Deacon Tyler. It was near the house, and the concussion drove the breath from his body and he was carried to the house unconscious and breathless. Mr. Timothy Pond being present he breathed into his nostrils and he revived, and his breath has been healthy ever since. The four men referred to are named as follows: John Tyler, Moses Tyler, S. B. Seamans and Luther Griswold.

In the progress of the Temperance cause several obstacles had to be met and overcome, one of which was the quality of the material employed in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, to supply the place of the fruit of the vine, referred to in the administration of that ordinance. It had been the practice to use wine bought at the stores, involving the idea of drugged liquor embracing a large por-

tion of Alcohol. Several members were dissatisfied, and a discussion arose which ultimately resulted in the adoption of the following resolution: "That the officers of the church be instructed to procure, for the use of the church in Communion seasons, pure native wine, when it can be procured, or the article that has been used during the year past, which is made by getting the juice of soaked raisins." This was in February, 1853, and now at this late day only a portion of the churches have come to this standard.

In a preceding chapter it was announced that great opposition was felt and manifested against the Agricultural Fair held in Town and that this was one reason why it was given up. J. R. Dixon, Esq., editor of the Cortland County *Republican*, was in Town attending one of the Fairs, busy in his attention to his interest concerning his paper. He tarried over night at the Public House and heard the language of those who opposed. Afterward he said to the writer, that he wondered how we could keep up the Fair with such opposition as existed in the community. It was a wonder.

Reference has been had to the scarcity of money in the early days of the Town. It would be thought strange that a farm of fifty acres should be mortgaged for thirteen and one-half dollars. In the time of the Old Loan, it is announced that the farm of Salmon Curtiss was mortgaged for that sum.

It has been heretofore stated that when any enterprise is proposed that promises to be for the good of the community, it is sure to encounter persistent opposition from a certain class of the population. To illustrate: On the line of Lots in this Town, between 36 and 26, where the State Road, so called, was intended to run, a stream ran on the line, and the travel took place about three rods north of the line. After a time, a man by the name of E. H. Luce came to own the farm, and proposed to put the road on the line where it was intended to be. Great opposition showed itself. *Now* all feeling on the subject is over, and nearly forgotten.

In the year 1867, a patent was secured, in this Town, for an apparatus for gathering apples, by Martin Darling. I was invited, with several other fruit growers, to meet at the residence of Martin Luce, to examine the same in operation. It met our hopes and we

recommended it to fruit growers for use, as deserving confidence. The whole realm of Nature had been examined to find a substitute for hand picking, and every plan had signally failed. It seemed desirable that a substitute should be discovered. One reason was, that persons in hand picking must hold on with one hand while the other picks the fruit and places it in a basket. The danger is that trust will be placed in unsound limbs, and they be broken and the operator be precipitated to the ground to the great jeopardy of life and limb. If one has two hands for his support, he is assured of safety. Within a distance of a trifle over a mile in extent, in my immediate acquaintance, four men have thus fallen from trees, and have been essentially disabled for a long time. Another advantage is, that when there is danger of a hard frost, a number of hands can be drawn together and many can be gathered in a short time. A prejudice arose against the use of the instrument, so that men could not be employed for *money*, to use it and give it fair treatment. Also, factory cloth was so very dear in time of the war that it cost more for the canvas than men were willing to pay, and the consequence was that its general use was abandoned. A few have continued its use and are satisfied. Among these is Theron Lincoln Esq., of Newark, Wayne county, N. Y., formerly of this Town. He speaks highly of it, and some others do the same. John S. Winters has used and approves of it. Dann C. Squires also expressed to the writer that he thought it must be a *good* thing. Martin Luce, Esq., of Cortland, who has no interest in its success, unless it can be used, told me that he gathered his apples with it one season, and that he kept them till the May following. He then took them to Cortland to sell. On his way he passed the residence of Martin Sanders, who came to the road, and looking on them, said: "How *could* you keep them till this time looking so fresh and sound?" Mr. Luce then gave the answer. Perhaps the people in Cortland will respect the opinion of Martin Sanders in reference to the appearance that apples should present when offered in their market for sale. I gathered a portion of my fruit in the same way one season, and the same was true of that. I insert this with the view to save a good thing from oblivion. It is safe to say that if a substitute for hand picking is ever discovered, *this is it*, inasmuch as Nature furnishes no other.

NUMBER XXXVIII.

WE have now arrived at a chapter of Conventions and Celebrations. It was common about fifty years since to have gatherings of the common schools, including a dozen or more, generally in the Summer but sometimes in the Winter. It was usual to have a list of questions printed and distributed through the schools to be committed to memory, and at the gathering have them propounded and answered in concert, as one of the exercises. The only record of a like gathering was on the 10th of February, 1831. There were present ten schools with their teachers, and the account was taken of the whole number of scholars belonging to the schools. As they were formed and marched, with flags and banners flying, at the head of martial music, the view was particularly inspiring.

The account of the schools was as follows :

TEACHERS.	WHOLE NO.	
	SCHOLARS.	NO. PRES.
Salisbury Clark, . . . . .	84	70
William Meeker, . . . . .	101	57
Erastus Phillips, . . . . .	50	50
Emily Mahan, . . . . .	36	25
Hiram Bouton, . . . . .	62	31
Isaac Bloomer, . . . . .	63	35
Cortland Hill, . . . . .	44	25
Katherine Morse, . . . . .	31	20
David Robinson, . . . . .	31	7
Eli Smith, . . . . .	35	8
Total, . . . . .	<u>537</u>	<u>328</u>

In 1826, the first fifty years of the life of our Government was completed. It occurred that many minds were exercised on the subject of the celebration of the Fourth of July, as a jubilee of American independence. The people were comparatively few, and had little knowledge of the way to celebrate that anniversary; but the interest was such that a celebration was arranged for the Fourth; and those engaged resolved to do their best to render the occasion an interesting one. Michael Frank was chosen to deliver the oration, and other arrangements were made to correspond. When the morning arrived it was found that we were without clergy. Some of our

well meaning citizens had persuaded the several ministers that it was unsuitable for a gospel minister to officiate on such an occasion. The best that could be done was to select individuals to perform the parts, and proceed, which was done. The attendance was rather thin, but the result was satisfactory. Frederick Hyde read the Declaration; Nathan Bouton offered prayer, and Michael Frank delivered the oration.

On the 25th of August, 1853, a gathering was had, called the Festive Gathering, which has been sufficiently set forth in the preceding pages.

Time passed on and events transpired, and when the Centennial approached, some minds began to cherish the idea of celebrating the same; and one great argument in its favor was the fact that the *three* individuals who performed the important parts in 1826 were still living and vigorous, and anxious to act in the same capacity again. Much correspondence was had, but it was finally agreed to call a meeting of those who were favorable, and one was held of considerable interest, especially with the aged men of the former occasion. Committees were appointed to have charge of the matter in its varied departments. Soon the people were generally aroused, and several unanticipated appendages were added. It was not originally designed to have cannon to employ in the exercises. But some were unwilling to have the day pass without the roar of cannon, and it was had principally through the persistent urgency of J. G. Tyler. It was afterward suggested that young ladies be selected to represent the several States, dressed in suitable uniform, which met the approbation of the managers. This proposition was suggested by Miss Josephine Mott, and goes to her credit. Miss Satt Sanford with A. E. H. Ladd and wife, had the charge of the selection of these young ladies and suggesting the manner of their costumes, which was very creditably performed. Soon the project of a company of fusileers was started, which was got up and managed with consummate skill and maturity of design. Arrangements were also made for fire works in the evening.

Now follow four biographical notices of the persons who engaged in the celebration of 1826, and also in 1876. It will be seen that this may lie open to the charge of egotism, inasmuch as in the

responses after dinner there will be some repetition, but it was indispensable that the speakers be left untrammelled, and that they were confined to the subjects allotted to them.

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## NUMBER XXXIX.

FREDERICK HYDE spent a portion of his youth here. He early engaged as teacher of the common schools, and was considered eminent in that employment. He afterwards studied medicine—the earlier part of his pupilage being with Dr. Hiram Moe, of Lansing, Tompkins county, and the later portion with Dr. Horace Bronson, of Virgil, Cortland county; and after graduating at Fairfield Medical College, he at once commenced the practice of his profession in Cortland, where he now resides, actively engaged in the duties of his profession. He, in due time, acquired the reputation of an eminent physician, which he still maintains. He has the confidence of the community as the following facts will fully testify. He was Trustee of the Cortlandville Academy, from its first organization, while it continued; and on the resignation of its first President, Judge Reynolds, he was elected in his place. He has been Trustee of the Cortland Normal and Training School since its commencement, and is now President of the Board. He is President of the Cortland Savings Bank. He has been a member of the Cortland County Medical Society since 1833. He was a member of the Medical Association of Southern Central New York, during its lifetime. He is a member of the Central Medical Association of New York. He was elected a permanent member of the New York State Medical Society, in 1854, and was elected its President in 1865. He participated in the organization of the American Medical Association at Philadelphia, in 1847, and has continued a permanent member of the same. He was a delegate from the New York State Medical Society to the International Medical Congress held in Philadelphia, 1876.

Early in his professional life he began to contribute to the literature of the medical profession, and has continued to do so, as the American medical journals and printed transactions of the different medical associations in which he is honored with membership, will abundantly show. He held the professorship of Surgery in Geneva Medical College, and discharged its duties for sixteen years. On the organization of the Medical Department of Syracuse University he was elected Professor of Surgery in this institution, the duties of which post he continues to discharge. He has ever been accounted a man of integrity, sound judgement and practical sagacity. Also combining the traits embraced in the comprehensive word, *reliable*. He has generally enjoyed excellent health, which, for a man of his age gives him a remarkable youthful appearance.

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## NUMBER XL.

**N**ATHAN BOUTON was born in Virgil, July 27th, 1802. His early life was familiar with the privations and hardships incident to the time. His opportunities for education were such as other children and youth of the time enjoyed. He was supposed at the age of thirteen to be rather an adept in figures, which led his fond father to determine to give him the opportunity to become a land surveyor. A place was found in Genoa where an experienced surveyor lived, who was persuaded to take him and teach him the elements of the profession, in the Spring of 1816. The expense was three dollars for tuition and two dollars for board. All the knowledge he ever gained afterward on the subject was the result of his own experience and study. He was not furnished with instruments till 1823, when he commenced practical land surveying, and continued the same employment during forty-four years, when nearly all the work, after ten years, was in settling disputed lines and harmonizing those in conflict. The work done has been rather



extensive and spread over a large share of the towns of Virgil, Marathon, Lapeer, Harford, Cortlandville and Dryden. Also some in Freetown, Scott, Truxton and Homer, implying the confidence of the general public in his skill and accuracy.

At the age of eighteen he was employed in teaching school, in which he continued from time to time, till 1845, in which he evinced great perseverance, though not always very popular. In connection to this he was appointed to school offices, such as Commissioner, Inspector, and Town Superintendent. He has always been a strong friend to education and an efficient promoter of the cause, in the time of his active life. The fact of his writing out at the suggestion of his father, the plan for the New York and Erie Railway, has been sufficiently set forth in the previous pages. In 1857 it pleased the people to commit to his trust the interests of the county, and he was elected to the office of State Legislator, by a majority of nine hundred or thereabouts; the duties of which he performed to the satisfaction of his constituents. Since that time he has been chosen on the Board of Supervisors against a very popular competitor. In moral and religious aspects he has had much to do, and, especially, in the late renovation of the Presbyterian Church, of which he has been for more than fifty years an efficient member. He was chosen to the office of Deacon, June 21, 1833, which office he has held since. He has been an ardent supporter of the temperance cause since 1829, and of the anti-slavery cause since its first inauguration. He has been the firm supporter of all the causes operating in the community, that have promised the progress and well-being of the same. Among other things he gave for the construction of the Syracuse & Binghamton Railroad two hundred dollars, and lost it; also to the Southern Central three hundred dollars, and lost two hundred of the same. He has likewise had committed to his trust the settlement of six or more estates; and three of them were heavy, involving the adjustment and distribution to the legatees of the several estates, the portions due to them respectively. All the estates involved embraced interests of more than fifty thousand dollars; and all this has been done without any fault being found from any reputable source. He has also collected the material for the History of this Town, which is now, at the time of this writing, in press, and has written the same out.

## NUMBER XLI.

COL. MICHAEL FRANK was born in Virgil, December 12th, 1804. His education was acquired in the schools of the Town and its vicinity. During the years of his residence here he became widely known in the county. He was elected Inspector of Common Schools several years in succession; also elected Supervisor of the Town. He was chosen Captain of the first company of artillery organized here. He was also prominent in the formation of several societies for mutual improvement among the young people of the Town. On the Fourth of July, 1826, he delivered an oration on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of American Independence, and on the Fourth of July, 1828, he delivered a temperance oration which resulted in the formation of the first Temperance Society in the Town.

He changed his residence from Virgil to Preble, in the north part of the county, in 1836, where he engaged in the mercantile business, and where he married Miss Caroline J. Carpenter, his present wife. While in Preble he was elected Supervisor of the town, in 1838, and Town Clerk, in 1839, which latter office he resigned, to go west. In the fall of 1839 he moved to Southport, now Kenosha, Wisconsin, at which place he became associated in the publication of a newspaper, *The Southport Telegraph*; and was connected with that paper, altogether, about twelve years. He also had editorial charge of other papers, for short periods. Prior to the adoption of State government in Wisconsin, he was a member of the Territorial Council three years, and after the adoption of State government, he was a member of the Legislative Assembly one year. He was elected by the Legislature in 1848, one of the Board of Commissioners to revise the laws of the State; also elected by the Legislature in 1861, a member of the Board of Regents of the State University.

On the incorporation of Southport as a village, in 1840, he was chosen President of the village; and on the change of the name of Southport to Kenosha, in 1850, and the incorporation of the place as a city, he was chosen Mayor. He held the office of Justice of the Peace two years, Treasurer of Kenosha county four years, City Superintendent of Schools six years. He was appointed Postmaster

at the city of Kenosha, by President Lincoln, and held the office about six years. In the military line he was appointed by Governor Dodge, of Wisconsin, Colonel of the militia, and subsequently General of the militia. Although commissioned a General, he has been more familiarly known the past thirty years, as Colonel Frank.

In matters of religion, morals and education, he has a well earned reputation. He united with the Congregational Church at Southport, in 1840, and has retained a church connection ever since. He was active in the early temperance movements in Wisconsin, and has always been a firm friend of the cause. In educational matters, particularly the introduction of the Free School System in Wisconsin, he did efficient service through the press, and other agencies. In 1870 he was appointed to a clerkship in the Treasury Department, at Washington. During the period of over eight years since he has been in government employ, he has been comparatively isolated, as most government employees are. The only marked event in his history during this time, was the delivery of an oration, July 4th, 1876, in commemoration of the Hundredth Anniversary of American Independence, in the same town and village where he delivered the Fiftieth Anniversary oration, just a half century before. It is probable that no event parallel to this occurred among the over forty million of people in the United States.

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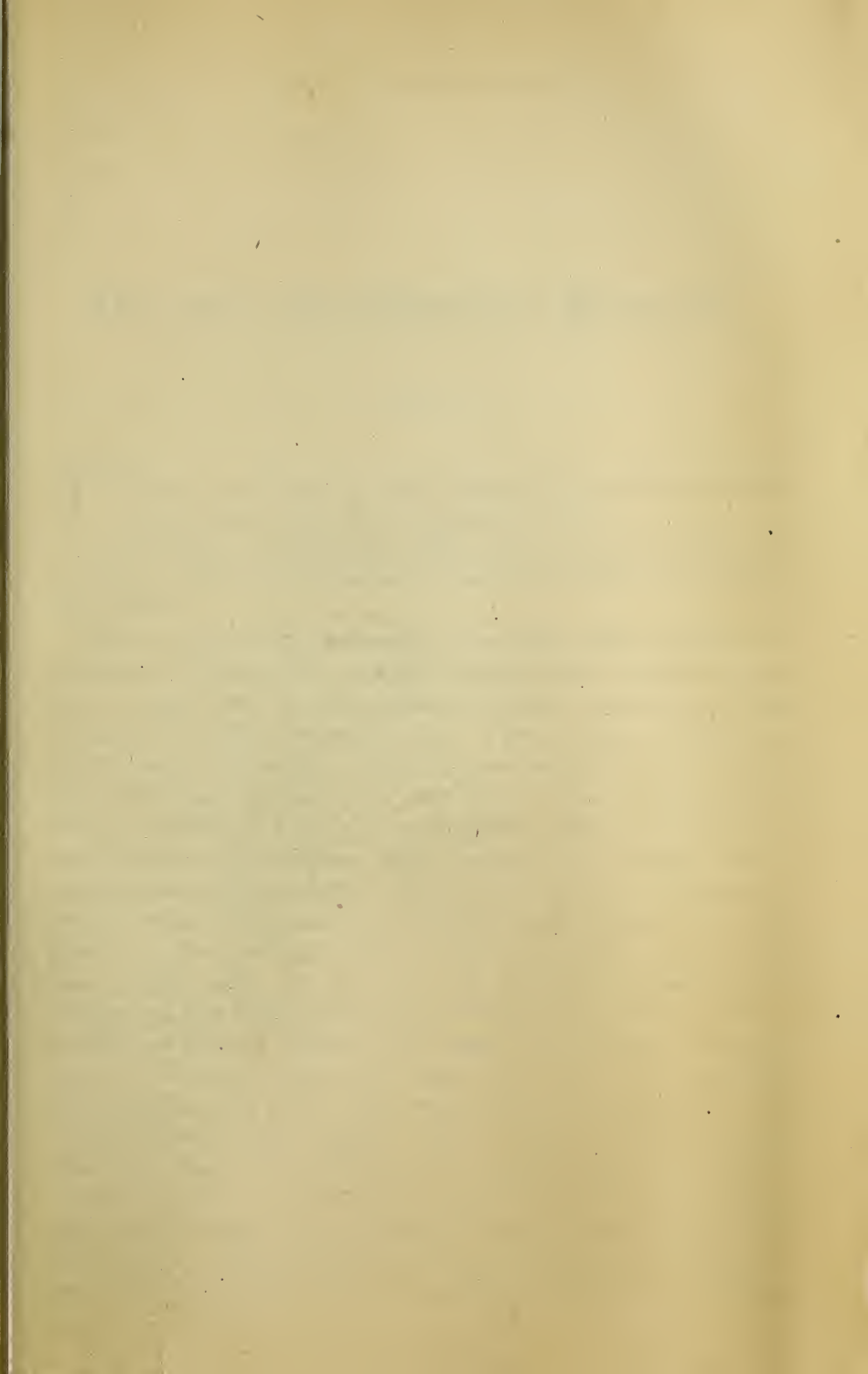
## NUMBER XLII.

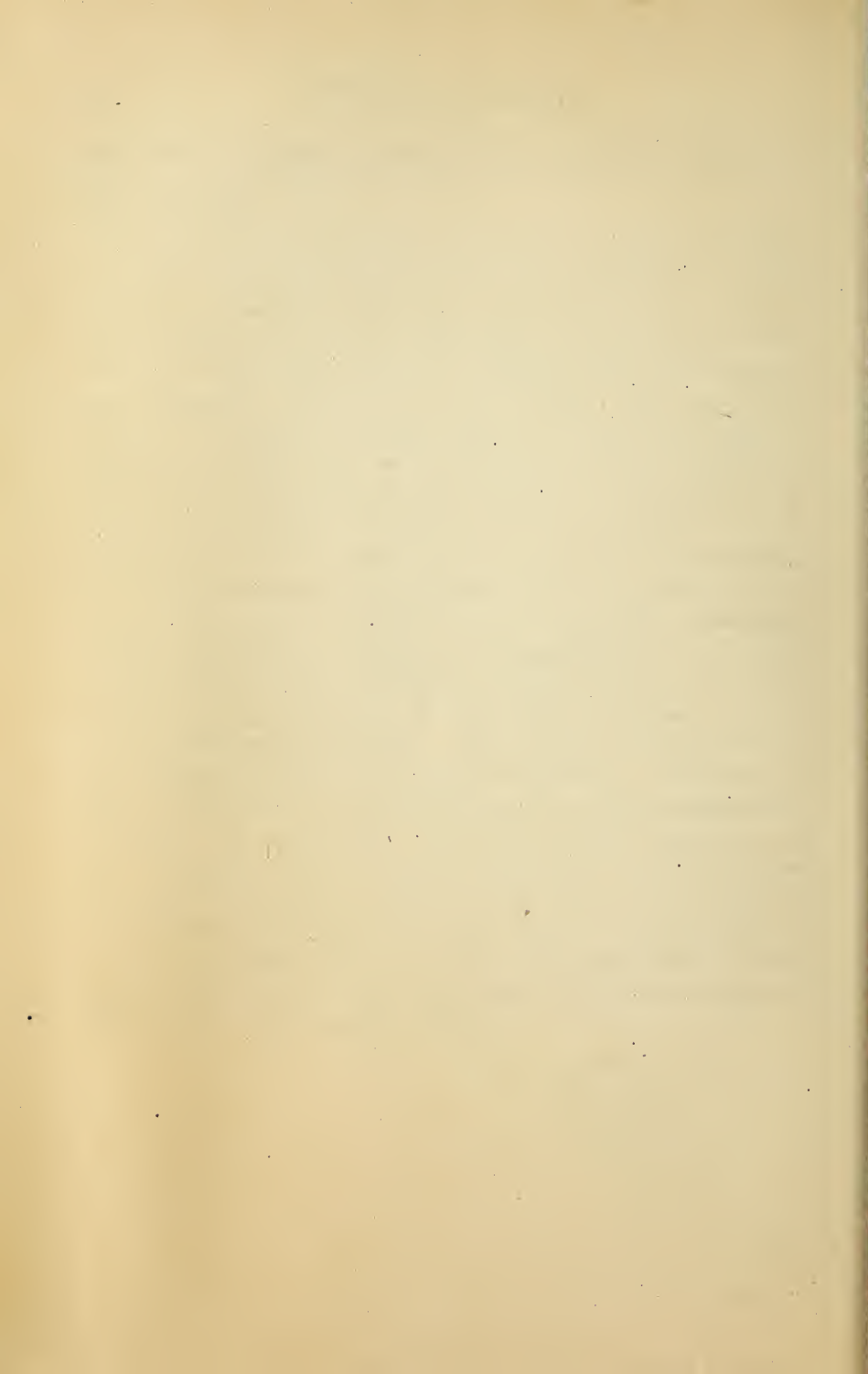
**COLONEL WILLIAM SQUIRES.** Though he was not born or reared in Virgil, yet, as he was the Marshal (the duties of which office he performed with peculiar activity,) at the Centennial, where the three preceding individuals who had participated in the two celebrations fifty years apart, it was concluded to be fitting that a brief biographical sketch should be given of him also.

William Squires, son of Zachariah and Catharine Squires, was born in Binghamton, N. Y., November 23, 1798. With the excep-

tion of the privation and hardship which is unavoidable with all early settlers, the early life of the subject of this sketch was not remarkable or unusual.

His opportunities for education were limited ; yet, by perseverance he acquired such a knowledge of the common branches as was then considered necessary for ordinary business transactions. He lived with his father on a farm, just west of the corporation line, until he was twenty-four years of age. In 1823 he married Lucy Church, his present wife. To clear up a farm of dense forest, pay for it, provide the necessary buildings, support his family and fulfill the obligations of society, was the task to which he invited himself, and which by the most untiring industry and good management, he accomplished at an earlier day than even *he* had anticipated, and was permitted to live for a number of years thereafter to enjoy the fruits of his toil and witness the improvement which his own hands had wrought. He served twenty-two years in the militia of the State, holding commissions of Captain, Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel. In early life he interested himself in religious affairs,—was among the first to espouse the cause of temperance, and helped to inaugurate the Washingtonian Society. The anti-slavery movement, in its very beginning, found in him a fearless supporter. In the years of 1865 and 1866 he represented his town in the Board of Supervisors acceptably to his constituents. He was one of the originators and active managers of the “Marathon Cemetery”—one of the noted institutions of the place. About the year 1863, he moved into the village, leaving his farm in the charge of his son,—since which time, though almost always busy, he has not confined himself to the management of business. He is now nearly eighty years of age, and bids fair to live yet a number of years.





## Virgil's Centennial Fourth.



THE day was ushered in by the boom of the cannon, procured through the persistent energy of J. G. Tyler.

The following account of the scenes and events of the day is essentially a copy of an editorial in the *Cortland Standard* of July 11th, 1876:

“In one of the long processions of carriages, which moved from Cortland to Virgil on the beautiful morning of the Fourth, we enjoyed a place, with the beaming and patriotic countenance of the President of the Day smiling upon us. The procession started from the Messenger House about 9:30 A. M., and wound its way over the hills and through the valleys to ‘Old Virgil,’ which was that day to witness a gathering of her sons and daughters, which would be memorable in her annals forever. The Cortland Cornet Band headed the procession, enlivening the way with choice music. From a number of carriages the National colors floated, and red, white and blue plumes on the heads of the horses in front of us made the outlook more patriotic still. As the procession passed on, carriages from various quarters were found waiting along the way ready to fall into line, and add still further to the length of the already extended array of vehicles. Before the village was reached the procession stretched back over half a mile, and must have numbered in the neighborhood of fifty carriages. Upon nearing the village the band struck up ‘Home, Sweet Home,’—the marshals came riding up to receive the visitors, and the small boy in all his various shapes made himself numerous round about. The place was already lively with a large crowd, and the festive lemonade, gingerbread and peanuts were displayed at divers stands. The one hotel was so packed

with people that it was a labor (anything but easy,) to work one's way through it, and all outdoors—at least in the immediate vicinity—seemed just as full.

“After a short delay a procession was formed, headed by the Cortland and Marathon Bands, and moved through some of the principal streets.”

The following thirty-nine young ladies—the leader representing the District of Columbia, and the others the several States, all arrayed in white and decorated with red, white and blue sashes, marched with uncovered heads in the procession, presenting a very beautiful appearance.

SARA CARPENTER, Leader.

Eva Doud,	Delia Price,	Antha Price,
Iva Doud,	Ina Price,	Mary Seamans,
Ettie Ballou,	Grace Bloomer,	Allie Rease,
Josie White,	Nelia Bell,	Emma Hutchings,
Jennie Low,	Luna Hutchings,	Jennie Sherman,
Carrie Webster,	Jennie Glazier,	Mary Bouton,
Jesse Pease,	Lillie Glazier,	Mary Space,
Minnie Chrisman,	Nettie Terpenning,	Hellen Chrisman,
Hannah Ball,	Hattie Wood,	Emma Branch,
Hellen McKinney,	Kate Barnes,	Jennie Trapp,
Jennie Hotchkiss,	Mary Gleason,	Anna Tyler,
Phemie Skinner,	Jennie Tyler,	Nellie Chatterton,
Kate Ryan,	Nettie Bacon.	

From the streets the procession passed to the Green in front of the Baptist Church, where a platform had been erected for the accommodation of those who were to take part in the exercises of the day. Primitive seats formed by planks being placed on inverted sap buckets were ranged in front and soon filled, and the crowd of those standing up stretched away even beyond the reach of the speakers' voices. The programme of exercises at the church was as follows:

Opening address by the President of the Day, Judge A. P. Smith.

Music—“Home, Sweet Home,” by the Cortland Cornet Band.

Prayer by Deacon Nathan Bouton.

Music by the Marathon Band.

Reading of the Declaration of Independence, by Dr. F. Hyde.

Music by the Cortland Band.

Oration by Colonel M. Frank.



## ORATION.

DELIVERED BY COLONEL M. FRANK AT VIRGIL, JULY 4TH, 1876.

FIFTY years ago to-day, I stood before the people of this Town, flushed with the ardor and enthusiasm of youth. I see before me a few survivors of that day, who were then in the vigor of early manhood, now bowed with the weight of years. We are the same in personal identity now as then; have the same patriotic emotions, and the same love of country. But the battle of life during the intervening years has seared us with furrowed cheeks and impaired our firmness of step. Had the forms and countenances we then bore been photographed and preserved, and our changed appearances of to-day placed by their side, how the contrasts would startle us! The journey of life from young manhood to old age would be exemplified in striking lessons.

A march of fifty years has brought us near the gateway that opens to the mysterious future, where the multitudes have gone we were accustomed to meet on these streets. While on this long journey what incidents have marked our pathway? What strange and unlooked-for events have followed in quick succession?

During the intervening years that have come and departed, all around us has undergone alteration. Fifty years ago the surrounding hills were covered with primeval forests, and the dark woods encroached on many a dwelling. Wild flowers bloomed unseen in the wilderness and wasted their fragrance in solitude. The aspect of the country is no longer the same; old landmarks have disappeared, and much that was unsightly has been removed. Better systems of agriculture have been introduced; farms have a more attractive appearance; homes have been improved and beautified.

A half century ago to-day I attempted to describe the progress that had been made during the preceding fifty years. I dwelt with enthusiasm on the advancement of our country in the direction of National greatness; the diffusion of education among the people; the rapid development of our agricultural resources; our progress in the arts, and in labor-saving machinery. A collection of agricultural implements, machinery, and household articles—common fifty years ago—would make an interesting exhibition for this centennial year. Improvements which were then regarded as triumphs of genius and skill, have since passed into comparative insignificance. Among the new implements of husbandry then being introduced was the grain cradle, which rendered nearly obsolete the old classic sickle. The threshing-flail was the same in kind as employed by the Romans two thousand years ago. The only instrument for mowing was the common scythe, which had undergone no material changes during many generations. Fifty years ago the popular thoroughfares, between city and country, were the turnpikes. A drive on these privileged roads was deemed one of the luxuries of travel, except that the exacting toll gates sometimes ruffled the temper of pleasure riders.

During this period the New York and Erie Canal, connecting the waters of the western lakes with the Hudson river, was regarded the wonder of the age—the greatest internal improvement achievement in America. This State enterprise was for a number of years the principal travel-route between the East and the almost illimitable West. The packet boat, moving four miles per hour, was as much the admiration of the then traveling public, as the modern palace car, with a speed of forty miles per hour.

On our half century anniversary a compliment was paid to American genius and skill, as having well nigh reached the limit of art, invention and improvement, leaving only to the succeeding half century the finishing of what had already been outlined. But how finite is the human mind to unfold the future. Then we had not in all this land one foot of railroad, not a locomotive, nor a telegraph line. Since then a new era has dawned on every department of industry. The necessity for hand labor has been reduced five hundred per cent. by the introduction of machinery, while at the same time the conveniences, the comforts and luxuries of life have been great-

ly multiplied. Science has brought into action many hitherto undiscovered forces,—man now stands leisurely by and directs the machinery that performs the labor drudgery before required of human hands.

Had any one predicted fifty years ago that before this centennial year journeyings on land would be performed at the rate of sixty miles per hour, and that words would be conveyed to distant States with almost the rapidity of thought, such prediction would have been treated as coming from a disordered mind, and unworthy of notice. So of many other discoveries and inventions, the products of our day, the suggestion of their coming realization, would have been deemed visionary.

In the progress of the world's improvements the United States have contributed a large share. The telegraph, by the aid of which news is transmitted on land and beyond the seas with the speed of electricity, is the invention of an American. Steam as a propelling power in navigation is American. The cotton gin, without which the manufacture of cotton goods would necessarily be limited, or produced at much cost, is the product of American skill. The reaper and the mower, now indispensable to successful farming, are American. The sewing machine, a necessity in every household, is American. The rotary printing press, by which the newspaper is worked off with marvelous rapidity, to be scattered over the country as plentiful as autumn leaves, is American. The planing mill and grain elevator are American. The manufacture of ice, producing it under a tropical sun, is the product of American mind. A vast number of other improvements and inventions in manufactures and machinery, of but little less importance, are of American origin, mostly within the past fifty years.

Our progress, too, in governmental science, has been in correspondence with the advance of education and the growth of liberal ideas. Old limitations to political rights have been extended, and the people invested more fully with the privilege of self-government. Laws incompatible with the genius of our free institutions have been abolished and new ones enacted, more in consistency with the welfare of the people.

At this point the inquiry naturally arises, will a like progress mark the coming half century, as during the past? Discoveries

and improvements are with rare exceptions the result of an educated mind. If the education of the people continues to go increasingly on, it is reasonable to expect progress in art and invention, during the next fifty years, as in the past. Science in its investigations is limitless in material things. It searches through the arena of nature, and brings into activity elements of power that have lain dormant through all the centuries of the past. It goes to the ocean depths; it scans the empyrean of the heavens, and pushes inquiry among the stars.

Although the unfoldings of the past may seem to have exhausted the power of man for further achievement, still there is a boundless field yet to be explored. Among the possibilities that may be reached at no distant period, a few are suggested: Motive power, more simple and convenient than steam for driving machinery, and adapted to plowing on the farm. Agencies for generating heat, which shall relieve the poor from the burdensome expenses of wood and coal. New facilities for safe travel, transcending the speed of railway locomotives. Cheap light, surpassing a hundred street lamps. Simple means for fertilizing the soil, increasing its productivity an hundred fold. New and inexpensive building material, supplying the deficiency of our decreasing lumber forests. An enlarged sphere of activity and employment for women, which shall command respect and be consistent with female delicacy and refinement, thus making available a large industrial element now contributing but little to the general stock of wealth. An extension of her legal rights, giving her a voice in matters involving the taxation of her property; in the management of the public schools, in which her children are educated, and in the protection of her family from licensed demoralization. Also a better understanding of the laws of health, leading to an avoidance of much sickness and suffering, and increasing the average longevity of human life. The discovery of effective remedies for the treatment of diseases now deemed incurable. More economical methods of living; cheapening expenses without abridging family luxuries, or interfering with the enjoyments, the culture and the refinement of society.

If it be said these suggested possibilities of the ensuing half century are chiefly chimerical, it may be answered, the same might

have been said with equal force fifty years ago to-day, in respect to the discoveries, inventions and improvements since then realized.

In the direction of civil progress, the field is broad and capable of improvement. Laws for the government of the people, adapted to a higher condition of civilization and refinement, which no statesmanship has ever yet devised. The recognition of law courts, making them tribunals of equity; abolishing useless forms and technicalities; setting aside the rigorous rulings of law and evidence to the end that the adjustment of differences between parties shall not be mere trials of professional skill, as men play games at chess.

In the direction of moral and religious advancement, less adherence to denominational lines between those who hold in unity the essentials of the christian faith. Talent, time and money expended for higher purposes than building up fragmentary religious sects and parties; more of right action; less of theologic theory; more of God and less of creed. Methods for the moral training of the young, which shall better fit coming generations for the true mission of life. Although all truth is eternal, without beginning and without end, still there is undeveloped truth yet to be applied to the education of children and youth, which shall change the moral structure of society. If this be not so—if there be no agencies yet unemployed, then this world will never be prepared for the promised millennial era. "All the space between man's mind and God's mind is filled with truth." What a vast domain yet to be occupied? What heights of moral grandeur yet to be reached? Is man always to occupy so low a scale in the order of being? Are there no undeveloped possibilities yet to be brought into action which shall give the world the semblance of new creation? Man was created "a little lower than the angels,"—can it be that the angels are but a little remove above the average man as now developed?

There is a tendency in the popular mind to conclude that our progress in art, invention and discovery, will alone insure the perpetuity of our free institutions and secure the highest happiness of the people. This is an error full of danger. Unless there be a corresponding growth of sound public sentiment, and of correct moral principle to give direction to our increasing material developments, our future welfare as a nation, can not be assured. Our national horizon is not an unclouded one; public honesty is on trial. The inquiry comes from every quarter, what can be done to arrest the

tide of corruption in places of trust and responsibility? The future can but excite apprehension. The remedy is not alone in the enactment of better laws by Congress, or by State Legislatures. Human enactments, however wise, are powerless to regenerate the hearts of the people; nor can courts of justice alone surpress the tendency to crime. There is a power above all these that controls human affairs. He who governs the world, and in Whose hands are the destinies of nations, needs to be revered and His laws obeyed. The imperative necessity of the times is a higher sense of public honesty, a more sacred regard for personal obligation, and a more conscientious respect for divine law. The essential elements of good government and of well ordered society can not be enforced upon the people by the law-making power.

But while it is true that law-makers cannot create a conscientious regard for right action, it is also true they can do much by unwise legislation to lower the standard of morality and of public virtue. Legislators of the present day have a weighty responsibility,—demands are made to remove some of the landmarks that guided our forefathers through the perils of our early history, and which have been recognized through later times. By the blessing of heaven we have grown from infancy to vigorous manhood. And now, since we have become a great nation, strong in national resources and defenses, men who have outgrown the moral teachings of the past, assume we can stand alone, and have no further need to acknowledge the Divine Being, in the way our fathers were accustomed to do. They would have our civil institutions divorced from the higher law; and they ask that there shall be no recognition of God in governments; State or National. And now comes the request for the removal of the Bible from the public schools, where it has had an undisturbed place a hundred years. Every enlightened christian nation on the globe acknowledges the Bible as its moral and religious standard. Then why exclude a book universally accepted by the christian world from the schools of the land, where its influence is needed to shape the character of those to whom the destinies of this great commonwealth are to be committed? The law of the State very properly prohibits and confiscates immoral publications, but why single out the Bible and put it on the list of expurgated books? Of what has the Bible been guilty, that there should come the de-

mand at this late day to bar the doors of education against its admission? The Bible by the common respect of mankind, and by the right of long possession, is entitled to retain its place in the schools, to be read without note or comment, and allowed to be its own interpreter.

As a matter of history, forcibly brought to mind on this anniversary occasion, I will remark that forty-seven years ago to-day I addressed a large audience in this Village, (church) on the evils of intemperance. On that day a society was formed to discourage the use of spirituous liquors. This was the first temperance organization in the southern half of the county. Although the movement met with opposition, yet public opinion was becoming so aroused to the necessity of reform, its friends were encouraged to hope that the use of spirituous liquors as a beverage, would, at no distant day, be rendered powerless for mischief. This expectation was not realized.

A vast amount of successful labor has been expended by the friends of the cause; radical changes have been effected in the customs of society, and many have been saved from untimely graves. Yet the evil of intemperance has followed the tide of population, penetrating every remote settlement where the habitations of men are found. The manufacture of alcoholic liquors is interwoven with the government, and has become one of the largest sources of National revenue. At intervals the evil has been checked, but not subdued. It has marched on like a desolating army, sustaining occasional defeats, but reviving again, overcoming organized opposition and breaking through the restraints of law.

When we commemorated the Fiftieth Anniversary of our National Independence, one-half of the States of this Union were slave and half nominally free. We were reproached by the enlightened nations of Europe with being false to our professions of freedom and of equal rights. The Declaration of Independence proclaimed to the world the inalienable right of all men to liberty; but this right was denied to the weak and defenseless. The constitution guaranteed freedom of speech and liberty of the press; but these rights were refused to the people of the South by statutory enactments, and to the North by a despotic public opinion. The pulpit and the press in the nominally free States dared give no utterances as to the wrong of chattel slavery. Proscription and sometimes personal vio-

lence were visited upon those who publicly expressed their convictions of the wickedness of selling men and women like cattle in the market.

The people of the northern States were compelled to do the bidding of the South. A law of Congress made it an offense, punishable by fine and imprisonment, to obey the precepts of the Divine law. To feed, clothe and give a cup of cold water to a thirsty, famishing human being, guilty of no crime, but that of loving liberty better than bondage, was held to be a misdemeanor. Whenever property, claimed in a human being, escaped to a free State, the free State citizen was required to pursue the fleeing chattel, and aid in returning it to the alleged owner. The highest judicial officer, the Chief Justice of the United States, uttered the declaration, "the negro has no rights, which white men are bound to respect."

But this unnatural condition of human affairs could not always last. After long and weary years the cry of crushed humanity reached the throne of Eternal Justice: the day of deliverance came, but not in the way man's wisdom had devised. By the blow of one man the shackles of the enslaved were broken, and more than three millions of people were invested with the rights to which they were entitled by God and nature. The name of Abraham Lincoln will be honored while time endures. Freemen through coming years will join the jubilant acclaim:

"Ring, O bells!

Every stroke exultant tells  
Of the burial hour of crime;  
Loud and long, that all may hear;  
Ring for every listening ear  
Of Eternity and Time."

"Loud and Long

Lift the old exultant song;  
Sing with Miriam by the sea;  
He has cast the mighty down;  
Horse and rider sink and drown;  
He has triumphed gloriously."

"It is done!

In the circle of the sun  
Shall the sound thereof go forth;  
It shall bid the sad rejoice;  
It shall give the dumb a voice;  
It shall belt with joy the earth."



Friends of the preceding half century—we are to-day irresistibly carried back in memory to other years. We live over again the periods of childhood and youth, and see once more in imagination the many familiar forms of those in whose presence we once took delight. Home life and home scenes crowd upon the recollection; the old household furnishings, the simple adornments of our dwellings and the happy inmates reappear in the retrospect. Well we remember when not a suit of broadcloth was worn by any citizen of this Town. Our clothing for every day and Sunday wear was made from cloth, the wool of which was grown on the farm, spun, woven and dyed at home. The prevailing color was a dusky brown, which was obtained by immersing the cloth in a dye made from the bark of the butternut tree.

Clad in home-made apparel, many a young man led his chosen bride to the hymeneal altar. The rosy-cheeked girls, too, of that period, dressed in garments of home manufacture, the cloth often being woven in plaids of pleasing colors. Summer wear was also largely of home production, every farmer taking care to raise a supply of flax, from the fibre of which was spun and woven by the wife and daughters, the lighter cloths for family use. The spinning-wheel had a place in every dwelling, and the young woman incapable of operating it, was presumed to be an invalid or feeble-minded. That modern family necessity, the servant-girl, had then not yet been born. The more costly articles of dress were sometimes worn by the female members of the family. A mother's silk dress, perhaps her wedding garment, by careful usage, was not unfrequently made to answer in turn for the daughter and granddaughter, undergoing occasional modifications at the hands of a dressmaker.

Some of the prevailing customs of that early period would appear novel now. Then it was the practice of young men, on coming to the village from the surrounding country, for the purpose of engaging in parties of amusement, to bring the young women on horseback; the young man sitting in the saddle, and the young woman sitting sideways behind him, clinging to his person to preserve her equilibrium. This kind of horseback-riding also prevailed to some extent with church-goers; not only young persons, but older people sometimes economized the use of a horse in this manner.

Many of us remember when there was not a farm in the Township, on which there was not an inhabited log dwelling, or the remains of a vacated one. In a majority of these habitations there was but one main room, which served the purpose of kitchen, dining-room, sitting-room, parlor, and also sleeping-room for the older members of the family. In these humble and unpretentious abodes many a young man has formed high resolves, which shaped his future destiny. From no other Town of such limited educational advantages have more young men gone out, who have made an honorable record. Some of these, years ago, passed from the ranks of the living, but are not forgotten. There are those who found homes in other States, absent to-day, as well as honored names present, whose biographical sketches would have been fitting on this occasion. No rural town in the State has had the facts of its early history more fully collected and published than has been done in this Town by one of its citizens—Hon. Nathan Bouton. In this connection it would be a historical omission not to mention that the building of the New York and Erie Railroad—an enterprise second to the New York and Erie Canal—was first suggested by a citizen of this Town—Mr. Nathaniel Bouton. He personally examined the route, became satisfied of its feasibility and importance, and called public attention to it, advocating its construction through the press.

Time has rolled on, and former things have passed away. As old and worn-out garments are cast aside, so has much of the past been discarded as obsolete and out of fashion. Old customs and old household arrangements have disappeared. The industrial buzz of the spinning-wheel and the noise of the loom have long since been hushed, and the more fascinating music of the piano has taken their place. The simple ballads sung in our early homes are no longer in accordance with modern taste. Operatic warblings occupy a higher sphere in music. The knitting work lying on the parlor table is a vulgarism,—Goody, Harper and gilt-edged volumes have a monopoly there. Home manufactured clothing, linen and woolen, belong to an age gone by. The finer cloths of machine labor have superseded the coarser fabrics.

While some of these changes seem of questionable profit, yet upon the whole they mark advancement in civilization and refinement.

Young men of to-day—you have a wider field of activity than was enjoyed fifty years ago. Many of the obstacles which young men were then obliged to encounter, have ceased to exist. Your advantages for the acquisition of knowledge are far more favorable than were theirs. The school-houses in their boyhood days were uncomfortable structures, often at distances remote from their homes. Now the school-house is brought within the convenient reach of every family, and the higher institutions of learning are of easy access. In this age, widely-separated States and Territories, by the increased facilities of travel, have been brought into near proximity,—distances which once required months to overcome, are now passed over in a brief space of time. Much of the drudgery of manual labor has been lessened, or entirely obviated by modern machinery.

However desirable may be the acquisition of wealth by honest endeavor, no young man should make that his chief ambition. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." One of the demoralizing tendencies of the times is an undue passion for money-getting. Honor and reputation are sacrificed to this end. Men are not content to acquire property in a legitimate way; a spirit of restlessness is abroad. Young men leave their industrial employments on the farm and enter the professions, which are already filled to repletion. Many quit the rural districts and go to the crowded city, with the expectation of gaining a livelihood in a more easy and genteel way. As a result the cities are over-peopled; great numbers live in poverty, without employment, while millions of acres of fertile lands are lying waste for the want of tillers of the soil. No avocation promises more certain remuneration than farming. This Town furnishes an illustration of what can be accomplished by the business of agriculture. Thirty years ago the people were comparatively poor, but without the aid of any considerable commercial or manufacturing interests, relying on the moderate but sure profits of the farm, thrift and independence are now seen on every hand.

Young men, look well to your institutions of learning, especially the common schools. These are the future safeguards of our free institutions. Our national life is dependent on the general education of the people; without this the Republic will prove a failure.

Also see to it, that your churches do not languish for proper maintenance and support. Aside from higher interests, thrift and

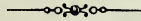
prosperity mark the communities where churches are encouraged and sustained. Among the first attentions of the early settlers of New England were the church and the school-house. From the influence of these followed culture, enterprise and noble activities.

Survivors of the Fiftieth Anniversary—there must come parting words. Many of us here to-day from distant States and widely-separated portions of the land, greet each other for the last time. Before the setting sun of the Hundredth Anniversary, some of us will exchange the last farewell, never again to revive together the recollections and the friendships of early days. Another such reunion as this is not among the possibilities of the future. We are nearing our final home; the shadows begin to gather, our sun will soon sink below the horizon of the living. But let us be cheered with the hope of another and a happier reunion in the great hereafter. And as we journey onward may we hear music in the air, drawing us nearer to the celestial city.

Whatever of time yet remains of our earthly pilgrimage, we will cherish the recollection of this day, and the occasion it commemorates. A hundred years of our national life have passed into history, and as we stand on the threshold of a new century we unite with the millions, who this day, from ocean to ocean, celebrate the Centennial Anniversary of American Independence. Our country to the last shall be our theme:

“Thou, too, sail on. O ship of state!  
Sail on, O Union, strong and great;  
Humanity with all its fears,  
With all the hopes of future years,  
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!  
We know what masters laid thy keel,  
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel;  
Who made each mast and sail and rope,  
What anvils ring, what hammers beat;  
In what a forge, in what a heat  
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope.  
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,  
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;  
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,  
And not a rent made by the gale.  
In spite of rock and tempests' roar,  
In spite of false lights on the shore,  
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea,  
Our hearts, our hopes are all with thee;  
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,  
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,  
Are all with thee—are all with thee.”

## *Further Proceedings of the Day.*



*President*—Hon. A. P. Smith, Cortland.

*Vice-Presidents*—Deacon N. Bouton and Elisha Winslow, of Virgil, S. H. Steele, of Harford; Dr. Wm. Fitch, of Dryden, and Jerome Hulbert, of Marathon.

*Marshal*—Colonel William Squires, of Marathon.

*Assistant Marshals*—Captain Nathan Smith, of Virgil; Major Samuel M. Byram, of Cortland, and Martin L. Sheerar, of Virgil.

President Smith's address was in his happiest vein. He referred to the fact that fifty years ago the fathers of those present had celebrated the Fourth of July in this Village, and that then prayer had been made by the same person who would offer it to-day, and that the Orator and Reader of the Declaration, acted each in the same capacity in 1826. A celebration under such circumstances, he said, would not be witnessed in any other place in the land. At the close of his remarks he quaintly and gracefully introduced Deacon Bouton, by saying, that he "who prayed for our fathers fifty years ago, would now pray for us." The Deacon then rose, and with trembling voice offered a prayer as fervent and as full of feeling, we venture to say, as any that ever fell from his lips. It was listened to silently and reverently by an assemblage, who will long remember it.

The Declaration was read by Dr. Hyde in a clear, strong voice, and with an evident appreciation of and love for the grand principles it sets forth.

No one who reads the oration by Colonel Frank can fail to admire it, though they will miss the charm of the speaker's delivery. It struck us at the time as one of the finest orations to which we had ever listened, and such, we believe, was the verdict of all who

heard it. The occasion lent an added interest to it, and Colonel Frank had the taste and wisdom to discard the stereotyped and hackneyed form of the regular Fourth of July oration, and furnish something fresh and appropriate, as well as eloquent. At its close it was moved and unanimously carried that the Colonel be asked for a copy of the oration, and that it be published.

The music furnished by the bands was excellent and gave general satisfaction.

The last exercise was a song by Joseph Bouton, which he sang in response to vociferous demands for the same, on the part of the audience. It was a song of fifty years ago, composed to celebrate a mild piece of jollity, in which the orator of the day and other of the boys and girls of the time had taken part, and was productive of any amount of merriment. Colonel Frank was not the only one of the participants who was present to hear the song, and both he and the others seemed to enjoy it heartily, though it was at their expense. Looking at their whitened hair and the wrinkles in their faces, it hardly seemed possible that these men and women could have been the heroes and heroines of the event described in the song.

Just after the exercises were concluded rain began to fall, and continued at intervals and with all degrees of violence during the day. The crowd which was variously estimated, at from four to six thousand persons, sought shelter wherever it could be found. A large table which had been spread in the open air, near the hotel, was hurriedly abandoned, and the small dining-room was filled in less time than it takes to tell it, by a hungry and determined crowd.

It had been the purpose of those who managed the affair to have the officers of the day, and those who were to respond to the toasts, entertained at the first table, and after the refreshments had been partaken of, to then have the toasts offered and responses made. Through some one's blundering or lack of determination, however, those of the crowd who had bought dinner tickets were allowed to force their way into the dining-room and sweep the tables regardless of officers and dignitaries, both home and foreign.

Meanwhile the fusileers, fantasticals, antiques and horribles, to a large number and in hideous raiment, with horns and other instruments of racket, on foot, on horseback, and in ancient and wonderful vehicles, paraded the streets and created an earthly pandemonium

to the delight and edification of the sight seers; and as Captain Byram said, the best display of a fusileer company that he ever saw.

After dinner was over, it was concluded to proceed to the platform in front of the church once more, and there have the toasts and responses, which had been so unceremoniously crowded out.

The following programme of toasts, with names of those who were to respond, was called by the Chairman of the Committee on Toasts, Mr. James S. Squires, of Cortland, who introduced them with the following remarks:

"I am happy in the honor that I was born in the old town of Virgil, and that I can meet so many warm hearts assembled here to-day on this festive occasion. There is no place on this earth like the spot where our eyes first beheld the light of day—no place to which the memory will so often return as to the many scenes and thrilling incidents that have taken place in the old school-house and in the forest homes of these, our native hills and lovely valleys. There is no place so sweet to our hearts as the home of our childhood. But I will not take up your time. I am thankful for the honor you have conferred upon me and those associated with me, of calling upon some of the happy faces here to-day to respond to the several toasts we have prepared for this occasion."

"The President of the United States"—Rev. S. G. Jones.

Rev. Mr. Jones being called on responded nearly as follows:

"MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I thank you for the honor conferred upon me, in the call to respond to the name of Gen. U. S. Grant, a name that will live on the page of history through future ages, as the greatest captain of modern times. He who led the armies of the free North, composed of the boys in blue, bearing the stars and stripes against the black flag of revolt and treason, until it trailed in the dust, and the iron-hearted Lee was compelled to surrender and lay down his arms at the feet of U. S. Grant. That name which, by the choice of a free people, sways the scepter as Chief Magistrate over this free nation. And when the time shall come for him to leave the chair of State, may his mantle fall upon the shoulders of Governor Hayes, who is to be our next President. Fellow citizens, let us for a moment turn our eyes to that Government under which we live in this most favored of all

lands, in this wide and capacious and still extending empire. Tired and jaded with the conflicts of Papal Rome, grieved and incensed at the infractions of the rights of conscience and the rights of men, with all the tyrannies of conflicting institutions, our ancestors sought a city of refuge, a hiding place from the storm, in the newly discovered section of the patrimony of Japheth. God, more than four thousand years ago, promised to Japheth an enlargement of his territory, when He gave him the broken and indented patrimony of Europe. Here he found it, and our fathers, taught in the school of Papal proscription, went as far as mortals, stung with the fiery Dragon, could go, to devise a government for themselves. They succeeded not only in *declaring* but in *sustaining* their independence of all the sons of pride; and in building for themselves and their children political institutions which have hitherto secured (except to the down-trodden African) and will continue, we hope, to secure the greatest portion of political and temporal happiness enjoyed by any people. This government proposes only to guard the temporal and worldly rights of men. It says this day to all the nations of the earth, that it has no partialities for the Jew, the Christian, the Turk or the African. Such is its creed.

“One hundred years ago this day, July the Fourth, 1776, was a memorable day, a day to be remembered as was the Jewish Pass-over—a day to be regarded with grateful acknowledgements by every American citizen, by every philanthropist in all the nations of the world. The light which shines from our political institutions this day will penetrate even the dungeons of European despots, *for the genius of our government is the genius of universal emancipation*. The example which our government gives is necessarily terrible to the crowned heads of Europe, and exhilarating to all who look for the redemption of man from political degradation. The American Revolution was a great and triumphant revolution. Many thanksgivings and praises have reached unto heaven because of this great deliverance. The incense of gratitude perfumed with the praises of saints, has long risen from myriads of hearts, and will continue to rise until the cloud shall cover the whole earth, and the glory of the Lord be reflected upon all the nations of the earth. The name of a Washington, a Franklin, a Jefferson, a Lincoln, and a Grant will long resound through the hills and valleys of this spa-



scious country, and will, in proportion as men are prepared to taste the blessing of our free institutions, continually increase. Posterity will only regret that, like Moses, all their political leaders save one died short of the promised land, that while they guided the tribes almost to Canaan, they fell in the wilderness without tasting the sweetness of the good inheritance. One hundred years ago our fathers were oppressed by the mother country. Here let me say, fellow citizens: Virgil, I love thee; my country, I love thee. It was this love element that begat the emotion that prompted our fathers one hundred years ago this day to pledge their fortunes, their lives and their sacred honor, to cast off the yoke of British oppression. It was this love element which prompted them to say, "Give us liberty or give us death." It was this love of country that has carried us through three bloody wars, in each of which and in all we have seen our enemies, and the enemies of our country, chained to the chariot wheels of Liberty and borne away, we trust, to return no more. It is this immortal law which controls the destiny of this favored nation this day. Under the influence of this immutable law empires have fallen, scepters have been lost. Let us then, fellow citizens, fight it out on this line of Liberty and make this broad land indeed and in truth a happy home for the stranger and an asylum for the oppressed of all nations. When Julian took from the early Christians their earthly possessions he told them a great truth, that 'their privations would make them more fit for heaven.' May these bloody wars, especially the last, make us hate oppression more and love liberty better. But while we consider that every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, let us not forget the victories of Him who did not lift up his voice in the streets, who did not use so much as a broken reed, nor consume a single torch until he made his laws victorious. In that spirit of mildness, meekness, and unostentatious heroism, let us fight the good fight of faith, and as good soldiers of Jesus Christ let us all be found faithful at our posts (Virgil). Help to the weak and home to the stranger, freedom to all she hath held on her way."

"The Governor of the Empire State"—Dr. F. Hyde.

"MR. PRESIDENT: A fitting response to the toast just read would involve a reference to a portion of the history of the State of New York, connected with its most essential interests. It is a pleasant

thought that a review of that part of the history of our State in connection with its Governors affords so much to commend, and so little to deplore. While the office of Governor is the highest sovereign gift of the people, no other official station holds so close relation to every citizen. The Governor of all officials in the State is most strictly the servant of every grade of its people. The millionaire has no stronger claim upon his executive clemency than the adjudged criminal clad in rags and stained with crime. Both our colonial and State history furnishes an array of names serving the people in the capacity of their chief Executives, for more than a century of prosperity. It should never be forgotten that New York's colonial Governors were men of ability and patriotism, sufficient to subserve officially the interests of the people; and they have left a history well worthy of study by the good citizen of to-day. Merging from her colonial to the full life of a State, under her first Governor, George Clinton, in 1777, with his long executive service, we come upon the names of Jay, Lewis, Tompkins, DeWitt Clinton, Yates, Van Buren, Throop, Marcy, Seward, Bank, Wright, Young, Fish, and a succession of executives down to the present incumbent, presenting a group whose history all delight to study; who honored the office, themselves, and their State.

“We have said that the governorship of the Empire State was near to all its people. This is well illustrated in the history following the election of the chief magistrate; for however fiercely waged the partisan conflict may be during the political canvass of opposing candidates, when the election is declared all hostility ceases, and with the official inauguration he becomes the Governor of every man, woman and child in the State. They rejoice to take him by the hand, and believe that he is their strong protector, the especial conservator of their choicest interests as citizens of a sovereign State. It is a source of commendable pride that the Governors of New York, by their fitness for their executive duties, have been known to the general Government as statesmen, and have been largely identified with its prosperity. It may well be said that the good name and solidity of the Federal Government cannot be separated from the statesmanship of the Governors of the Empire State. It needs but a glance at the history of the educational institutions, the great charities, which so thickly cover the State, and

the civilization that reaches after the masses of our people, to make all good citizens delight to join in according all honor to the Governors of New York. May it be true in all the future history of our beloved State that her Governors shall be worthy watchmen adorning the towering walls of her greatness."

"The men who have held judicial position from the old Town of Virgil"—Col. M. Frank.

Col. Frank remarked that he ceased to be a resident of Virgil forty years ago. Having no time given him to refresh his memory, he could not pretend to accuracy of statement. Among his earliest recollections was Mr. James Glenny, who was probably the first man that held the office of Justice of the Peace in this Town. He was a native of Ireland, and about fifty years of age when he settled in Virgil. He was an educated man, and given to literary pursuits. Col. F. recollected him as wearing shoe and knee buckles; his hair, nearly white, was worn long and tied in a cue behind with a red cord. In other respects his dress was patterned after the professional classes in Ireland, in the style of over a hundred years ago. As a Justice of the Peace, Mr. Glenny presided with dignity, having due regard to old-time customs and ceremonies. He died over sixty-five years ago.

Col. F. briefly noticed other Justices who held offices in the Town over fifty years ago: Wait Ball, Moses Rice, Simeon West, Josiah Hart, Joseph Reynolds, George Frank, etc. Wait Ball and Joseph Reynolds were Judges of the County Court, also Rufus Edwards at a later date. The judicial officers of a later period he would not refer to, because not familiar with their history. Col. F. spoke of the great progress that had been made in law reform the past fifty years, in doing away with useless forms and legal fictions; he indicated still further reforms in law proceedings, which it was desirable to see accomplished.

"The speaker, reader and officers of the day"—Dr. J. B. Benton.

"I would be happy to respond in a fitting manner to the toast just offered; but I fear that the time and the occasion, as well as the brief space allotted me, will hardly admit of such a response. Standing here as we do on the glittering threshold of a new century, with all the thousand memories of the past rising up before us, to

engross our thoughts, it would seem hardly possible to direct attention to individual character, and secure for it a proper appreciation, even though the delineation might be drawn by a master hand.

“In the contemplation of the characters presented by this toast I feel my own weakness as I stand before you to discuss even briefly the merits of the distinguished persons named: Dea. Nathan Bouton, Hon. Michael Frank, and Prof. Frederick Hyde, M. D., constitute a strange trinity of individuals in their moral worth and intellectuality; and yet they widely differ in many traits of character.

“If we look at Dea. Bouton and study his life and character, we are struck with his undeviating consistency, great simplicity and wonderful circumspection of life that has rounded out and completed a symmetrical christian character, that but few have been able to attain to. By hard study he made himself a good scholar, and wielded in his town a wide influence for good. His moral courage, always equal to any emergency, has never allowed him to wait for others to lead the way to reform; but in his own Town, and I might say in his county, he has always led the van in everything that promised the good and elevation of the race. I am proud to own that he was once my teacher, my schoolmaster, and it is not possible for me to estimate the extent of his influence in moulding my own character, and encouraging me to a high and noble manhood. If I have made a failure it is not the fault of his example or his teaching. Our honored president, who has presided over the Virgil Centennial Celebration with such becoming dignity and urbanity, is no less than the same individual who presided over a former similar meeting, now separated from this by a broad chasm of fifty years! And though his long and useful life may not have won for him fame or great distinction, or even reputation as the world calls it, yet he has won that which is even better—he has won a character. A man may win distinction and be a villain. He may win reputation and be a knave; but he cannot win character and be either. It was fortunate for Virgil that Dea. Bouton was reared here, and was so permanently fixed that he could not run away. Like the sun in yonder heaven, with its daily visitations sheds its golden beams over your extended fields of living green to give them warmth and generous productiveness, nor spurns the meanest thing, touching all the myr-

iad flowers that bloom in the by-ways and on the hill-sides with a new beauty and a fresh perfume, so our friend has not withheld the radiance of his moral power, to point you to a higher life and a nobler purpose.

“I hope my old friend, Michael Frank, will not feel slighted or aggrieved because I have not sooner paid my compliments to his honor. I have felt extreme delicacy in approaching the character of our distinguished orator for more reasons than one. In the first place, he occupies an intellectual plane so far above me that I cannot hope to grasp him for analysis. Besides, his more active life has been spent far away from me, and the fruits of his genius and intellectual labors I am mostly ignorant of. His character, however, was well formed here among you, in the Town that gave him birth. I well remember that, even in his youth, he was a kind of literary deity with me, whom I felt it no sin to worship. With a brilliant intellect and an indomitable thirst for knowledge, he gave himself up to study. He remained with you long enough to distinguish himself for ability and many excellencies. He migrated to the West in quite an early day, with his accomplished wife, and took an active part in politics. Receiving promotion, he soon distinguished himself as a ready and fluent orator, and wielded an influence in the organic structure of one of her now populous States bordering on the Mississippi. We cannot speak of him further with any degree of definiteness. Early in life he reared a high moral standard beside such men as Nathan Bouton; and the presumption is that he has never lowered it a hair, though he may have changed his politics. His high integrity and stainless purity of character to-day furnishes in one of the Departments at Washington one individual, at least, whose acts are not amenable to an investigation from a Congressional Committee. Though the age be depraved, this instance proves that the depravity is not total. With all the wealth of his intellect there was one thing our honored friend could never do; and that was, he never could drive a horse without a liability to upset the vehicle and spill out the load, or demolish a portion of the highway fence. He seemed to possess a greater love for sublime mental abstraction than he did affection for a horse, or a passion for graceful driving. In this I always had a deep sympathy for my old companion and friend. While it will be vain in a few remarks to

do justice to the exalted abilities and sterling virtues of our eloquent friend, it may be just as vain and as difficult to trace with exactness all his mental eccentricities, which help to embellish and complete his true character.

“It now remains for me, in this response, to speak of my learned friend, Doctor Hyde; and as his life and character loom up before me I am truly bewildered, and find the same embarrassment I felt on approaching the subject commented on, rather increased than diminished. I have known him long and well; and had the honor once to have been his pupil. Possessed of a large cerebral development, along with a fine physical organization, and a most favorable blending of the temperaments, Doctor Hyde could not have well been anything else than a philosopher and a logician. With his indomitable perseverance, lofty ambition and strong will power, it is not surprising that he to-day holds a high position in his profession. He has gained his eminence not by a stroke of genius, but by constant, persevering toil and effort. Order and system are the law of his being. If you know him once, you know him forever. Fixed in his principles and firm in his integrity, you always know where to find him. This, as much as his skill, has given him a reputation and rounded out his character. He has spared no pains to qualify himself to discharge any and every trust that might be laid on him, as a physician and surgeon, by the profession; and while the faculty has honored him, he in turn has never failed to honor the profession. The old Town of Virgil may well be proud of him, proud to own him for one of her sons. I wish she could boast of more like him. The high position he holds in one of the reputable schools of our land, for the cultivation of medical science, is a higher compliment to his merit than any I should be able to pay, even if I held all language at my command. With a private life as pure and as stainless as the Parian marble, I would leave my distinguished brother safe in the embrace of the affection and gratitude of a people who know how to appreciate merit and reward virtue.”

“The ladies of our native Town, unsurpassed in beauty, intelligence and virtue”—Dr. R. Walker.

The ladies of our native town, responded to by Dr. Ransom Walker, of Owego. We have not his remarks, but he responded

very eloquently and paid a merited tribute to the ladies of the Town, which was received with acceptance and gratification.

“Nathan Bouton, who suggested this Semi-Centennial”—E. P. Slafter, Esq.

“It is a pleasure for me to respond to this sentiment. The subject upon which I wish to speak is the character of this good man. A long and useful life has been granted to him. He lives to-day as he did fifty years ago—a christian man, a warm friend, an honored member of society, a good neighbor, respected and loved by all. He has been identified with all the reforms of the past half century. He has been foremost in bringing about the desires of the heart of every good man. His prayers and alms were for the oppressed. His example and teachings were on the side of temperance and education. He has lived to see slavery blotted out, temperance to become popular, and education greatly advanced. Fifty years ago to-day, upon this very spot where we are now, he invoked Divine blessings to rest upon those that were assembled to celebrate the birth of a nation; and to-day we hear the same voice, although feebled with age, still strong in faith, imploring the same blessing to rest on us. And I think I now hear him say, as did Simeon of old: ‘Lord, lettest now Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.’”

“To the absent sons and daughters of Virgil”—N. Bouton.

Mr. Bouton rose and said:

“MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW CITIZENS: The sentiment to which I am called upon to respond implies much of human sympathy, and of the kind and loving affections which are supposed to exist between the intimate relations in life. Individuals speaking of the confidence and mutual love existing between persons are very apt to say: ‘They love each other like brothers.’ This feeling is realized by persons sustaining the family relations to those who have removed to a great distance, and whom, especially, they do not expect to meet again this side the grave. Now, my friends, it is needful that we yield to this sundering of affection in order that our country may be settled, and her hidden resources may be developed. We like our sons and daughters to cultivate and improve the native soil. It is for the general good of the country in a temporal view,

and also for the promotion of morals and religion. May all who leave the domestic hearth subserve these great interests. And if we and others, their parents and friends, should appear like the aged oak, with barren limbs reaching out from the decayed trunk, while life lasts let us not fail to keep the home cheerful by the addition of such improvements as shall make all pleasant and cheerful on return which any of them shall make in after years."

When the last of the regular toasts had been responded to, the President read the following volunteer toasts and called upon the persons named after each to respond:

"Virgil, the home of our nativity"—H. L. Bronson, Esq.

Mr. Bronson rose and said:

"MR. CHAIRMAN, GENTLEMEN AND LADIES: There are two words in the sentiment just proposed which to all men are so pregnant with meaning, so fraught with recollections of the past and associations of the present, that they must ever find a warm response in every breast. They are the words, *home* and *nativity*. [Turning to the President]. Why, Mr. Chairman, you may write them to the shuddering tenant of the frigid zone, he proudly claims that happiest spot his own; and the naked native, panting on the line, boasts of his golden sands and palmy wines. Yes, friends, I believe it is an innate principle, common to all men of whatever race or condition, that the first and best land above all others is the land of their nativity. It is the land of their birth; and wherever they are, it must always be to them the dearest spot on earth. In much the same way and prompted by the same impulses, the word "home" strikes a sympathetic chord in the hearts of men. Thus, Payne's sweet song, "Home, Sweet Home," finds the same welcome now that it did when some of you here present to-day sang it at your first re-union, fifty years ago. But when we take the two words together and say, the home of our nativity, we have them combined in one scene—the sunlight of early days, the golden spring-time of life, the scene of all life's joys. Backward, to these hallowed associations, man is ever reverting. Backward to these scenes would he ever be returning. And thus, O Virgil, have we, thy sons and daughters, old and young, from far and near, assembled here to-day in re-union to celebrate the choicest blessing that can be conferred



upon a people—the blessings that flow from freedom and independence. Some of you have journeyed far and long. You have left the old Town in the vigor of youth or the bright flush of manhood. You return—with silver locks upon your brow, and you wear the marks of time. Most of those who bade you “welcome home” at your former re-union have passed away, and live only in grateful memory. But a new generation has risen up the while, proud of their ancestry and their native home. And thus, be it ever in this, our natal town. Let the altar fires of liberty be ever brightly burning. Let the spirit of freedom and independence never die or grow dim, but let it be enduring, ever as the grand old hills that rise on either side. And let all the sons and daughters of this, our natal Town, be always filled with love and remembrance of Virgil, the home of our nativity, the land of our birth.”

“The physical features of our native Town, emblematical of her people”—Lewis Bouton.

“The physical features of a country are reproduced in the character of her sons. From that land whose bold outlines are traced against the heavens we look for resolute and courageous men. The free, health-giving atmosphere of our hills and mountains forms one of the strongest bulwarks of our civil and religious liberty. The Alps look down on a people brave as they were in the days of Gessler. The hills and glens of Scotland are peopled by men worthy to be called the descendants of Bruce and Wallace. The mountains of eastern Tennessee are peopled by men loyal as our own. The heights of our native Town are among the most elevated in the State. From her lofty hill-tops you may see the horizon hundreds of miles in the distance. And her sons stand correspondingly high among their fellows in all that ennobles manhood. Oh! I love old Virgil's rocks and hills, her glens and rills, her sunshine and her storms. These have aided in furnishing the brain, the muscle, and in giving the vim, so essential to the proper development of our resources and the establishment of our liberties.”

“What old Virgil may be proud of”—James S. Squires.

“Of her majestic hills and her lovely valleys, of her crystal streams and her picturesque scenery. She may well be proud of the name she bears of the distinguished Roman poet, who was the son of a

farmer like yourselves. It is because we have seen the forest converted into so many lovely homes, and so many recollections cluster around our hearts of the memory of other days, that our tongues are too feeble to express one-half the joy we feel on this occasion. When I think of the fathers and mothers of our old Town of Virgil, and the memories they have left behind them of industry, integrity and virtue, and of how the sons and daughters were constantly trained to the practice of those principles which always exalt a nation; when I remember that almost everywhere a Virgil man has been located, in whatever pursuit in life he has been engaged, he has been the leading spirit of his place, whether as a professional man, or as a farmer, mechanic or merchant, proving to the world that industry, integrity and virtue will exalt a man as well as a nation. For the men of old Virgil stand forth in all communities like the majestic oaks of the forest, meeting all the storms through the battle of life with honor to themselves and the Town that gave them birth. And here it is, in the principles and deeds of her sons and daughters that make the chief glory of the Town we are so proud to-day to hail as our birth-place. May her influence and honor, her glory and joy in the sons and daughters she sends forth into the world never grow less!"

It has been thought best to insert in this place the following letter, which came to the post-office during the speaking, but was not taken out until after the meeting closed:

PAINESVILLE, O., July 1, 1876.

*Deacon Bouton,*

DEAR SIR: I regret very much that I cannot accept your kind invitation to be present at your Centennial Celebration in old Virgil, where I spent more than thirty years of my early life. In early life I sometimes felt ashamed to say that I lived in Virgil, such a poor, out-of-the-way town. But such feelings have long since passed away. There are so many noble-hearted men and women still laboring for the public good; and so many sons and daughters gone forth from the old Town to bless the world, that I am now proud of the name of Virgil. I offer the following sentiment: The pioneers that hewed down the forests, and the pioneers in moral reform, are entitled to the lasting gratitude of the present and future generations.

Yours truly,  
J. STORRS.

With the response of Mr. Squires the speaking closed for the day. The brief interval of clear weather which had been enjoyed was almost immediately followed by a heavy rain, in the midst of which many who had come in from neighboring towns were obliged to start for their homes; yet we will warrant that not one of them begrudged the time or trouble it had cost to participate in Virgil's Semi-Centennial Celebration.

Besides the Cortland delegations there were large numbers present from Marathon, Dryden, Harford and other places near at hand, and some even from far distant States.

I have been thinking of you very much lately  
 and wondering how you are getting on. I hope  
 you are well and happy. I have been very busy  
 lately but I will try to write you more often.  
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H. BOLTON

1875













